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\nDR WHO in\n
\nTHE TENTH PLANET INVADES THE MOONBASE\n
\n \n
\nNovelisation by\n
\nALAN SMITHEE\n
\n \n
\nBased on the Aaru motion picture written by \n
\nKit Pedler, Gerry Davis and David Whitaker;\n
\nAdapted from the BBC television serials\n
\nby Kit Pedler and Gerry Davis \n
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\nFOREWORD\n
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\nFrom Shepperton to Skaro – Dr Who on the Big Screen\n
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\nWhen the deal was struck between Amicus and Hammer to co-produce Dr Who films, the obvious monsters to replace the Daleks as adversaries were the Cybermen. The silver giants had proved popular enough to have appeared three times in two years, with two more stories in the works. There was only one fly in the ointment. Hammer producer Michael Carreras disliked the designs of the Cybermen as they had appeared on television. He was also convinced that while the costumes were adequate for television, the flaws in their design would be magnified on screen to a point at which they might look cheap or ridiculous. A conversation with the producers of the Doctor Who television series had thrown up a possibility that would benefit both sets of producers, however. The BBC and the film's producers agreed to share the costs of producing new Cybermen costumes. These updated costumes, which would debut in the television serial 'The Invasion', were sleeker and more powerful looking than their predecessors, and would be as impressive on the big screen as they on television.\n
\nThe decision to invite Brian Hayles, writer of the television scripts of 'The Ice Warriors', to work with David Whitaker on the screenplay of Dr Who and the Ice Men from Mars had been a successful one and the producers chose to repeat the tactic by inviting Kit Pedler and Gerry Davis, the men most closely associated with the creation of the Cybermen and the writing of their stories, to work with David Whitaker on the screenplay. 'The Tenth Planet', 'The Moonbase' and 'The Tomb of the Cybermen' were all considered as the basis for the film, with Michael Carreras particularly taken with the possibility for body horror in the latter story. Ultimately, though, the three writers chose to amalgamate 'The Tenth Planet' and 'The Moonbase', taking what they admitted were two similar tales and turning them into one story far grander and more ambitious than could have been attempted on television. \n
\nThe combined plotlines offered a chance to ensure that all of the expanded crew of Tardis would have plenty to do. After being reduced to cameos at the end of the previous film, Bernard Cribbins, Jill Curzon and Roberta Tovey joined Peter Cushing, Jim Dale and Valerie Leon for this trip into the future. To join them, stalwart Hammer director Terence Fisher assembled a splendid cast of character actors led by Robert Hardy as the moonbase's commander, Hobson, and former Tarzan Jock Mahoney as General Cutler. The cast was particularly notable for its diversity, showing a range of nations working together in the future and putting women in important roles at the bases on the Moon and at the South Pole.\n
\nFisher had been reluctant to commit to the film but had been persuaded by Carreras' description of the Cybermen and the potential to make them genuinely terrifying. The director certainly accepted that challenge, setting out to make the Cybermen as disturbing as they were

petrifying. In particular, the shots of the few human remains inside of a dead Cyberman positively oozed Hammer's style.\n
\nThe production was entirely studiobound with shooting again taking place at both Shepperton and Bree Studios.\n
\nThe Gravitron had been a particularly impressive set in the television version of 'The Moonbase'. It was also the central location for many set-piece scenes in the film, which meant that a good deal of the design budget was sunk into the Control Room of the moonbase. The other main design expense was the lunar landscape which hosted several key scenes. Clever use of lenses and forced perspectives, along with strategically placed rocks and craters, made the plains look far larger than they actually were, particularly during the impressively staged low-gravity chase back to Tardis.\n
\nSome of the costs for these major sets were offset by the use of heavy shadows in other scenes, which allowed only part of the Sickbay to be created, and most particularly the tense scene in the food store, which had its atmosphere heightened to censor-worrying levels by being filmed in near darkness. Ultimately the only cut asked for in the scene was to shorten the close up of Susan's terrified face which "lingered so long as to become sadistic". \n
\nCarreras had hoped that there would be a chance to save on budget for both this film and another Hammer production, Moon Zero Two, by having both films use the same sets and props. Ultimately, though, there was very little crossover between the films.\n
\nAround a third of the way through production, Carreras asked for the film's ending to be extended to have a lengthy sequence added, setting up a potential return for the Cybermen. Though the writers complied and wrote the sequence, which stretched to almost ninety seconds, director Fisher simply didn't have the budget or the time to make it a reality and made do with telling the story through effects shots.\n
\nThis fourth film was considerably darker and more tense than its predecessors, with Fisher bringing a definite flavour of Hammer to certain sequences. On its release in 1969 the film was met with mostly positive notices, complimenting the film's production values and the tense nature of certain scenes. The Cybermen were praised as being far more frightening than the fire extinguisher Daleks Cushing's Dr Who had faced in the first two films. Cushing himself was also lauded as having grown into a "more actively heroic character with a real moral backbone" while the returning members of his family also received positive notices for "having the chemistry of a real family". Of the supporting cast, Carmen Munroe was singled out for praise as were Robert Hardy and a very youthful Timothy Dalton.\n
\nThe movie's domestic box office return exceeded those of any of the previous films and made its money back several times over at American cinemas, leading Subotsky and Carreras to begin negotiations with the BBC to extend the licence to make big screen Dr Who adventures. The BBC were happy to offer a three picture extension on top of the already contracted five.\n
\nWhile Subotsky and Carreras sat down to plan the sixth, seventh and eighth movie adventures

for Dr Who, they finalised details on the fifth film, which entered production a week after The Tenth Planet Invades the Moonbase opened. After four adventures in space or in the future, Dr Who was coming back to Earth in his own time... and a legendary monster would be waiting for him.\n
\nMichael Loggins, 2019\n

\nPROLOGUE\n
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\nThe Discovery\n
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\nResearch station Zeus-4 was considered by many to be humanity’s greatest scientific development of the Twenty-First Century. It had been constructed in sections out beyond the orbit of Earth’s Moon before ion drive powered transporters took those sections deep into the solar system just past the outer edge of the asteroid belt. \n
\nOnce assembled and operational, Zeus-4 became the hub for many extraordinary scientific developments. Earth’s first light-speed spaceship, codenamed Enterprise after the famous TV starship, was being built and tested at the station. Astronomers deployed the most powerful telescopes ever build by man while scientists ventured from the station and its partner base on the dwarf planet Ceres to explore the asteroid belt and the Oort Cloud at the outer edges of the solar system to uncover the ancient secrets of the birth of the planets.\n
\nJohn M’Benga’s specialisation was in examining Trans-Neptunian objects, the comets, asteroids and celestial detritus at the outer boundary of the solar system. For decades, scientists had observed the billions of objects, studying their composition, finding dwarf planets among the rocks, ice and dust. For M’Benga the Holy Grail of his work was discovering the cause of gravitational anomalies among the Trans-Neptunian objects. Irregularities in the orbits of these objects had been a mystery since they had first been discovered. Even the orbit of Pluto, the largest of these bodies, was at least slightly affected. Theories about the cause varied from a gas giant planet on the outer edge of the Oort Cloud to a second star in the solar system, a brown dwarf in a wide elliptical orbit swinging out several light years from Earth’s sun before returning. Some had even suggested that the brown dwarf, which would generate no light or heat but which would radiate gravity, was a dead sun captured from a long-disintegrated neighbouring system. John M’Benga was a good enough scientist to know that theories were fine and often entertaining but what really mattered were facts. He would find facts and mould his theories from those rather than do what too many scientists – and far too many politicians – did in moulding facts to fit an existing, convenient theory.\n
\nAn hour into his morning shift, M’Benga found something impossible. In one region of the Oort Cloud everything was out of its expected position. Everything was moving. He studied the computerised display. The information on these distant objects updated constantly, with telescopes relaying data which had already taken hours to reach the station.\n
\nThere was something.\n
\nM’Benga focused on the object. It was a planet. At that shape and size it had to be. None of the known dwarf planets were in that region of space. It had to be something new, something unknown.\n

\nThe display updated, showing the object more clearly. Why was it so much clearer?\n
\nM’Benga looked at the readings again. They couldn’t be right. It was impossible, surely? The planet was moving closer, into the solar system and it was moving fast.\n
\nRedirecting the telescope, M’Benga called up an image of the planet. It wasn’t a gas giant. That surprised him. It had an atmosphere, land masses... He checked the spectrographs. Liquid water? Nothing that far from a star could have liquid water. It just wasn’t possible. It had to be too cold. It should be frozen.\n
\nHe pressed the comms button. ‘M’Benga to Commander Brokencloud.’\n
\nThe captain’s face appeared on a small monitor. The traditional Native American artefacts in the background showed that she was in her quarters. ‘What is it, John?’\n
\n‘I...’ John pointed at his displays, aware that the commander couldn’t see them. ‘I...’ He couldn’t find the words. ‘You need to see this. It’s... You need to see it. Just... just come up here, will you?’\n
\n‘On my way.’\n
\nThe screen went dark and M’Benga returned to his displays, watching the readings. A few minutes later, Commander Brokencloud entered the observatory.\n
\n‘What’s got you jumping, John?’ Brokencloud asked.\n
\nM’Benga pointed at his displays. ‘There’s a planet,’ he said. ‘A new planet.’\n
\nBrokencloud looked at her friend sceptically. ‘That looks a bit close to have gone unnoticed, John.’\n
\n‘I know,’ M’Benga nodded vigorously, ‘and it’s getting closer at...’ He slid the planet’s calculated velocity across to an isolated readout so it was easier to see, ‘...at this speed.’\n
\nBrokencloud stared at the planet’s velocity, ran the calculations again and then ran them twice more. ‘That’s impossible,’ she said. ‘It’s travelling too fast.’\n
\n‘Mmm...’ M’Benga was only half listening. He had programmed the planet’s course into the computer and its projection had just come up. ‘This can’t be a coincidence,’ he said. ‘I got the computer to predict the planet’s course.’ His hands slid over the touch sensitive screen. A map of the solar system appeared on a side-screen. A dotted line showed the new world’s path into the heart of the solar system and a close rendezvous with the third planet out from the Sun.\n
\n‘Earth,’ Brokencloud said softly, ‘and no, I don’t believe in coincidences either.’ She thought briefly then said, ‘Can you prepare all this information for a data burst back to Earth?’\n
\n‘Of course,’ M’Benga agreed. ‘It’ll take ten minutes maximum.’\n
\n‘Do it,’ Brokencloud instructed. ‘We need to let them know as soon as possible.’ The commander had only taken two steps towards the door when the station shook under a thunderous impact. ‘What the...’\n
\nAlarm klaxons filled the air and every screen flashed EMERGENCY ALERT.\n
\nAnother impact shook the station. Metal creaked ominously.\n
\nBrokencloud hit the comms button. ‘Bridge, what’s happening?’\n

\nDan Harris’ terrified and panicking voice answered. ‘We’re under attack. There’s a ship out there. It’s not... it’s not like anything I’ve seen before.’\n
\n‘Show me,’ Brokencloud barked. \n
\nThe screen crackled then switched to show a circular craft between Zeus-4 and the ice asteroid they mined for the station’s water, oxygen and hydrogen. A bolt of energy came from the ship and Zeus-4 shook again.\n
\n‘Can we take this kind of beating?’ M’Benga asked desperately. \n
\nThe answer came as another impact rocked the station. This time it was followed the explosion of a decompression as the hull breached. Metal rendered and tore.\n
\n‘We need to get to the escape pods,’ Brokencloud said. She hit the comms again. ‘All hands abandon ship. All hands abandon ship.’\n
\nIt was too late. The next blast hit far closer. Almost immediately cracks began to appear on all of the bulkheads. Air began to hiss through cracks, venting into space.\n
\nJohn M’Benga knew that there was no escape for them. ‘Who would do this?’ he asked.\n
\nIt was the last thing the astronomer ever said. The outer bulkhead shattered, blasting M’Benga, Brokencloud and all the lab’s equipment into space. \n
\nMoments later, more blasts from the mystery ship detonated the station’s engine hub and Zeus-4 disintegrated as a huge explosion erupted in the engine room. \n
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\nInside the mystery ship a silver hand halted over the firing controls.\n
\n‘No survivors,’ a flat, mechanical voice said.\n
\n‘None,’ came the reply in a similarly emotionless tone.\n
\n‘Set course,’ the mechanical voice ordered. ‘Set course for Earth.’\n

\nCHAPTER ONE\n
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\nArrivals on the Moon\n
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\nWith its customary whooshing and wheezing sound, Dr Who’s time and space machine, Tardis, landed, settling with a slight bump.\n
\nDr Who, the elderly inventor of this most extraordinary craft, looked around the rather busy control room. Half a dozen of them had entered what looked like a perfectly average Metropolitan Police Box in Dr Who’s lovely little garden, walking straight into the impossibly large interior of the spacecraft. Now consisting of several rooms, Tardis was as large as a good sized house. \n
\nDr Who’s niece, Louise, was present along with her policeman boyfriend, Tom. On the other side, Dr Who’s nephew, Jim, and Vanessa, his girlfriend who hailed from 1912, were also looking to the old scientist expectantly. At thirteen years old, Susan was the youngest aboard. She was also the most at home in dealing with the controls apart from Dr Who himself. \n
\n‘We’ve definitely landed, Grandfather,’ Susan said.\n
\n‘Splendid, Susie,’ Dr Who said amiably. He operated the scanner control. ‘Now, let us have our first look at Mars.’\n
\n‘As long as there are none of those Ice Warrior things,’ Jim said quickly. ‘I had enough of them at that ice base. I thought it was supposed to be little green men from Mars, not flipping huge ones.’ Some months earlier, Dr Who had travelled to the future with Jim and Vanessa and found the world gripped by a new Ice Age. They had also found Martian Warriors and their spaceship, all of which had been locked into the heart of a glacier for tens of thousands of years. Dr Who and his party had barely managed to defeat the Ice Warriors and escape with their lives. Jim had no wish to meet those Martians again.\n
\nNeither did Vanessa. ‘I’ve seen enough of them for a lifetime.’\n
\nThe screen flickered into life showing a supposedly colour picture of their surroundings. Everything was grey and black.\n
\n‘Are you sure that’s Mars?’ Louise asked. ‘I’d expect it to be a bit more...’\n
\n‘Red?’ Tom suggested.\n
\nLouise nodded. ‘Well, yes.’\n
\n‘Maybe the telly’s on the blink?’ Tom joked. ‘That new colour telly’s a bit unreliable, isn’t it?’\n
\nSusan bristled at any hint that the ship might have malfunctioned. ‘The scanner is working perfectly,’ she said indignantly.\n
\nDr Who nodded. ‘It is,’ he agreed. ‘I’ve checked the calibration. The colour is...’\n
\nThe old man’s voice tailed off. The scanner and been turning showing a three hundred and sixty degree image of the rocky, lifeless grey terrain outside of Tardis. A ball of colour now filled

the top of the picture, a familiar and beautiful blue and white globe floating in the heavens.\n
\nThe Earth.\n
\n‘We’re on the Moon,’ Jim said. ‘Not Mars, then?’\n
\n‘No,’ Dr Who said miserably, ‘not Mars, I’m sorry. It’s the Moon.’\n
\nLouise took her uncle’s arm. ‘Never mind,’ she said sympathetically. ‘I’ve always wanted to see what the Moon’s like.’\n
\n‘So have I,’ Vanessa said, taking Dr Who’s other arm. ‘I’ve looked at it all of my life and wondered what it was like.’\n
\n‘Can we go out and look around?’ Louise asked.\n
\n‘Please?’ Vanessa added, her eyes large and appealing.\n
\nTheir excited words had set aside the old man’s disappointment. ‘Very well,’ he said. ‘We have some spacesuits in the store room, don’t we, Susie?’\n
\n‘Yes,’ Susie confirmed. ‘We topped them up with air a few days ago.’\n
\nDr Who clapped his hands together enthusiastically. ‘Let’s get ready to go outside, then.’ \n
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\nTen minutes later, the wooden door of Tardis opened and Dr Who stepped out onto the surface of the Moon. The spacesuits he had built were remarkably lightweight, a one piece coverall with integrated boots and gloves which simply fitted over the wearer’s own clothes. A transparent globe helmet was secured to locks at the neck. Dr Who had assured his family – and he did think of every member of his party as family now – that the suits were made of a material that would protect them from the sun’s radiation and that the bottles of air they wore on their belts would last at least five hours.\n
\nSusan had been more excited at trying out the new force barrier at the door which would keep the atmosphere inside Tardis and not vent into the vacuum but to her disappointment none of the others had been all that interested.\n
\nTardis had landed at the foot of a dusty grey hill. A broad open plain lay in front of them before a set of rocky hills rose some way ahead.\n
\n‘It’s a bit, well...’ Tom’s voice trailed off. ‘There’s not much to see.’\n
\nLouise tapped his hand. ‘Were you expecting a nice pub?’ Her nose wrinkled in the way it always did when she was teasing him.\n
\n‘There was one,’ Tom answered, ‘but it closed...’\n
\n‘Because there was no atmosphere,’ Tom, Louise and Jim all chorused.\n
\nSusan shook her head sadly at the terrible joke.\n
\nThey all turned as they heard a slight yelp from Vanessa.\n
\n‘What is it, my dear?’ Dr Who asked, a worried tone in his voice.\n
\n‘It’s...’ Vanessa’s voice stopped. ‘I’ll show you.’ She pushed hard off the ground and rose elegantly into the air, slowly coming back down to land ten feet further ahead. ‘What is this?’\n
\n‘Oh, I’m so sorry, my dear,’ Dr Who apologised. ‘I forgot to mention that gravity on the Moon’s

surface is considerably lower than that on Earth so we must all be careful if we try to run or jump at all, because each step or leap will take us much, much further. So you must all be very...' Dr Who's voice tailed off as first Jim then Tom and Louise sailed through the air.\n
\n'Come on, Tom,' Jim called. 'It's great fun.'\n
\nTom landed and sprang forward. 'Come on, Jim. I'll race you to those rocks.'\n
\n'You're on.' Jim bounded after the young policeman.'\n
\n'I better keep an eye on them,' Louise said. She was obviously enjoying herself as much as Tom and Jim, and sprang off after them.\n
\n'Big kids,' Susan said, trying to sound disapproving.\n
\n'Be careful,' Dr Who called again. 'If you tear those suits you'll suffocate.' His head turned inside his helmet. 'Come along, my dears,' he said to Susan and Vanessa. 'We should get after them.'\n
\nThey bounded after the more adventurous members of their party who had almost reached the rise at the far end of the plain.\n
\nTom's voice crackled through the radios in his companions' helmets. 'What's keeping you, Jimmy-boy? I'm almost there. One good jump and I'll be at the top.'\n
\n'All right,' Jim conceded. 'All that time on the beat's made you quicker than me. You win.'\n
\n'Be careful, Tom,' Louise called, but Tom had already pushed off from the ground. He rose majestically towards the rocks... \n
\n...and sailed over the top of them, his arms flailing as he realised that he had leaped too high. He wailed as he disappeared behind the great rock formation. His yell went on for several seconds before it ended abruptly with a muffled impact.\n
\n'Tom?' Louise yelled. 'Tom, can you hear me?'\n
\nJim and Louise scrambled up the rocks and were surprised to find Dr Who leading the rest of their group just a few steps behind them. They made it to the top of the rise in a few seconds and saw that on the other side, the drop was several times that which they had just climbed. At the bottom of the slope lay Tom. Standing over him were two space-suited figures. They carefully picked Tom up and carried him towards a set of domes which rose out of the lunar surface. There were four or five smaller domes and a large array of solar panels, all gathered around one larger, central dome. A huge dish kind of installation with what looked like the barrel of a gun projecting from its centre was visible inside the largest dome. Tom was carried into what appeared to be a kind of airlock and the door slid shut.\n
\n'It's a moonbase,' Jim said.\n
\nSusan agreed, 'We're in the future.'\n
\n'And the constable is in the moonbase,' Dr Who said worriedly.\n
\n'Did anyone hear him breathing?' Louise asked. She sounded frantic with worry.\n
\n'Don't worry, my dear, I'm sure he's fine.' Dr Who's words sounded hollow, and not only because of the radio's distortion.\n

\nVanessa squeezed Louise's hand. 'Let's go and find out.'\n
\n'Yes,' Dr Who agreed, 'but everyone be careful. This slope really is very steep.'\n
\nIt took a few minutes for them all to navigate their way down the slope and a few more to make their way to the airlock. Tom's accident had made them all more cautious. Louise was anxious and Jim sounded guilty every time he asked if they thought Tom was all right.\n
\nThe entrance to the airlock appeared impenetrably complex to most of the party but proved simple enough to operate for Dr Who and Susan, and a door slid open. They all shuffled into the bland, white chamber. A moment later the outer door slid shut and heavy clamps sealed it in place. A red panel was illuminated on the wall, reading VACUUM: KEEP SUITS SEALED. Air hissed into the chamber slowly and then abruptly blasted them from all sides loosening moon dust from their suits and boots. A few seconds later, the air was sucked out again, taking the dust with it. Air slowly filtered back into the airlock and the red light dimmed. A green light below it lit up showing the word ATMOSPHERE SAFE.\n
\n'I think we can remove our helmets now,' Dr Who said. He released the catches holding his helmet in place and sniffed cautiously. 'Yes, it's recycled but perfectly safe.' As his companions set about removing their helmets, Dr Who operated the airlock's internal control. On the far side was a surprised-looking Chinese scientist. 'Hello,' said Dr Who affably. 'Mr...?'\n
\n'Chen Lim,' the scientist answered automatically. \n
\nHe looked even more surprised when the old man shook him warmly by the hand. 'A pleasure to meet you, Mr Lim. I am Dr Who and this is my family.' He swept an arm out to indicate the others.\n
\nChen Lim simply stared at the unlikely group.\n
\n'So,' said Dr Who, rubbing his hands together, 'I do hate to say this because it is such a cliché, but would you please be so kind as to take me to your leader?'\n
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\nThe main Control Room of the moonbase was a wide, high space containing the strange dish with its odd gun barrel type array which was aimed directly at the Earth, which hung a beautiful blue and white globe in the blackness. Control panels were arranged in banks and against walls in the room. Half of the room's wall consisted of the transparent outer skin of the dome, which gave the Control Room a breath-taking view of the lunar surface. A map of the Earth, displaying the progress of the station's work, dominated the facing wall. At the rear of the control room a set of steps led up to an elevated platform.\n
\nIn the centre of the room, surrounded by a dozen of his crew was Commander Hobson. He was a man of average height but with a broad, solid build. He looked robust and strong and had a voice that boomed when he didn't keep it under control. His uniform tunic sported the number 1 high on the left of the chest. Each of the other members of the crew also wore a different number on their shirts. \n
\nHobson looked irritated to find strangers in his moonbase. 'Who the devil's this?' he demanded

of Chen Lim. ‘They haven’t come from one of the colonies, have they?’ He turned to Dr Who. ‘You should know better. You know that colonists are to stay in their colonies. It’s the only way to keep track of everyone on the Moon.’\n
\nDr Who held up his hands to placate this obviously combustible man. ‘I assure you we are not colonists,’ Dr Who said. ‘We are only in your rather splendid moonbase because two of your fellows brought one of my party inside.’\n
\n‘There’s another one?’ Hobson sounded even more irritated.\n
\nIt was Louise who answered. ‘Yes. Tom. He had an accident.’\n
\n‘Your men very kindly brought him inside,’ Dr Who said. ‘I do hope he’s alright.’ \n
\n‘This other one. Where is he?’ Hobson asked Chen Lim.\n
\n‘Sickbay,’ Chen Lim answered. ‘Bennett and Sanchez took him there.’\n
\n‘What for?’ Hobson exploded. ‘We don’t have a doctor!’\n
\n‘May I ask why an establishment such as this does not have a medic?’ Dr Who asked in surprise.\n
\n‘Oh, we have one,’ Hobson said. ‘Unfortunately he’s a patient in his own sickbay.’\n
\n‘I beg your pardon?’ Dr Who asked.\n
\nA female voice came from behind Hobson. ‘What Commander Hobson means is that our doctor is ill.’ The voice belonged to an attractive, dark-skinned woman of around thirty who was coming down the steps from the upper level. ‘We have an outbreak of some new disease. Unfortunately Dr Parkinson was the first to fall ill.’\n
\n‘Thank you, my dear,’ Dr Who said politely. ‘I am Dr Who. These are my nieces, Louise and Vanessa, my grand-daughter Susan and the handsome young fellow is my nephew, Jim.’\n
\n‘Giselle Martens,’ the woman said, shaking Dr Who’s outstretched hand. ‘Who’s the other one in your party?’ She turned to Hobson. ‘It was me who sent the men outside to pick him up.’\n
\nHobson bristled. ‘Was it?’\n
\nMartens ignored the man’s irritation. ‘I saw him falling. When he didn’t get up, I thought he needed help, so I sent two of the men outside. I assume you don’t think I should have left him to die.’\n
\n‘Of course not,’ Hobson answered, ‘but I would appreciate it, Dr Martens if you would remember occasionally that I am in command of the moonbase.’\n
\nMartens was unimpressed. ‘How can I forget? You keep reminding everyone all the time.’\n
\n‘Because some people never listen!’ Hobson answered irritably.\n
\nLouise had grown increasingly agitated. ‘Will you just let me see Tom, please?’\n
\nA tall and handsome young man wearing the number 2 on his tunic appeared at Hobson’s shoulder. ‘I’ll take you to the sickbay,’ he said to Louise.\n
\n‘Down boy,’ Dr Martens scowled at Jules. ‘I’ll take them to the...’\n
\nA chime filled the air and a large suspended screen crackled to life. A square-jawed, dark-haired man in his mid-thirties smiled out at them. Behind him a group of men and women in

neat uniforms moved around efficiently going about their duties. ‘Hello, moonbase,’ he said in an educated American accent.’\n
\n‘Hello, Captain Cutler,’ Hobson answered. ‘What can we do for you?’\n
\n‘You can get that Gravitron under control,’ Cutler said. He had tried to sound as if he was making a joke but there was a hint of grievance in his voice. ‘We just had to burn through a tenth of our fuel to stabilise the station’s orbit.’\n
\nHobson looked at the dark haired man wearing 2 on his shirt. ‘Jules?’\n
\nJules looked bemused and shook his head. ‘No idea,’ he said, crossing to a computer bank and calling up a display. ‘Terry,’ he said to the man on the screen, ‘the Gravitron has been working perfectly. It’s been controlling a hurricane in the Pacific and keeping polar air from coming down over Canada. It’s been on target dealing with those for three days. Sending you the logs now.’\n
\nTerry Cutler’s eyes flicked to the side of his screen. ‘I believe you, Jules,’ he said, ‘but if you’re not knocking us out of orbit, what is?’\n
\n‘I don’t know,’ Jules said, ‘but I promise you it wasn’t us.’\n
\n‘Could we possibly see the readings regarding whatever forced you from orbit?’ Dr Who asked.\n
\nHobson waved a hand to quiet the interloper. ‘Ignore that,’ he said brusquely. ‘We’re more than busy enough. That’s not our business. Sorry, Cutler, but we all have our duties.’\n
\nCutler waved a hand in understanding. ‘No worries.’\n
\nDr Martens eased past Hobson. ‘But it’s my duty. I have responsibility for a telescope in orbit on the dark side of the Moon. If something is affecting the orbit of Captain Cutler’s space station it might affect my telescope.’ She smiled at Cutler. ‘Hello, Terry. Would you send me the details, please?’\n
\n‘For you, anything,’ Cutler replied.\n
\nDr Martens flashed her smile at Cutler. ‘You should be careful about saying things like that, Terry. I might hold you to it.’\n
\nHobson turned on Martens. ‘Dr Martens, do I need to remind you once again that I am in command of this moonbase?’\n
\n‘No,’ Dr Martens replied pleasantly. ‘No more than I need to remind you that I’m an astronomer and not actually part of your crew.’\n
\nThey had reached a stand-off, not for the first time.\n
\nTerry Cutler’s voice broke the tension. ‘That’s the data sent, Giselle. You know, Commander, it might be of interest to you, too, if it’s likely to affect the Gravitron.’\n
\nHobson paused thoughtfully for a moment before a beaming grin appeared on his face. ‘You’re right, both of you. Of course you are. Thank you, Captain Cutler. Moonbase out.’\n
\nThe picture on the screen faded and died.\n
\n‘I’ll tell you if I find anything interesting,’ Dr Martens said to Hobson.\n

\nThe commander agreed briskly, his temper entirely forgotten. ‘The rest of us can get back to work.’\n
\nJules tapped Hobson on the shoulder and pointed at Dr Who and his family. ‘What about them?’\n
\n‘What?’ Hobson appeared to have forgotten his guests. ‘Oh, yes. You said you’re a doctor, didn’t you?’ he said to Dr Who.\n
\nThe old man flustered slightly. ‘Well, I am Dr Who...’\n
\nHobson interrupted. ‘Excellent. This is a bit of luck.’\n
\n‘Is it?’ Vanessa asked. ‘Why would that be?’\n
\n‘Because this gentleman – Mr Hobson I believe Dr Martens called him – does not have a doctor in his sickbay.’ Dr Who gave Hobson his friendliest smile. ‘I shall be happy to assist.’ He eased Jim towards Dr Martens. ‘And I volunteer my nephew Jim here to help you, Dr Martens.’\n
\n‘Are you an astronomer?’ Dr Martens asked, obviously more in hope than expectation.\n
\n‘A mathematician,’ Dr Who answered. ‘Those figures and statistics you have are just the sort of thing he’s so good at.’\n
\n‘And if a big, hairy monster turns up I throw my abacus at it,’ Jim added with a cheeky grin. \n
\n‘Commander.’ A young man with dark curly hair and a Scandinavian accent called to Hobson.\n
\nThe commander responded immediately. ‘What is it, Nils?’\n
\nNils pointed at the display on his computer screen. ‘Another of those drops in air pressure, sir.’\n
\n‘Another one?’ Hobson leaned over the young Dane and summoned further information. ‘We need to get on top of these, Nils. Air’s a precious commodity up here. Find out the cause of them.’\n
\n‘Yes, Commander.’\n
\n‘Is there a problem?’ Dr Who asked politely.\n
\nHobson looked at the old man, as if he had forgotten about him completely. ‘You’re still here? No, nothing for you to worry about. ‘Chen Lim, would you show them to the Sickbay?’\n
\n‘Yes, sir,’ Chen Lim answered. ‘This way.’\n
\nAs the scientist ushered the odd-looking party off to the sickbay and Dr Martens led the young lad upstairs, Commander Hobson felt an itch at the back of his neck.\n
\nThat was always a sign that something bad was going to happen.\n

\nCHAPTER TWO\n
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\nInside the Moonbase\n
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\nTom Campbell lay still and pale as death. \n
\nThe moonbase’s sickbay was a reasonably sized room lined on either sides by five metal-framed beds. Above each of the beds were display screens and at the side of each bed was a large, blocky, technologically advanced machine standing around four and a half feet high. For the beds that were occupied the machines flashed and hummed quietly, and the screens showed details of the patient. \n
\nThe silence of the sickbay was shattered as the door slid open and Dr Who’s party hurried in, led by Louise. She looked around the room and ran to Tom’s bedside.\n
\n‘Tom? Tom?’ She turned to her uncle, desperately worried. ‘He’s so pale.’\n
\nLouise was right. Tom was deathly pallid and his breathing was shallow. There was a large discoloured lump rising on his forehead, with a vicious red cut slashing across the bruised tissue. \n
\n‘Let me see,’ Dr Who said, moving Louise gently aside. She hurried around to the other side of the bed as he examined Tom. ‘Ooh dear, that does look nasty, doesn’t it?’\n
\nVanessa joined Louise and put a comforting arm round her friend. Louise took Tom’s cool hand in her own.\n
\n‘How is he?’ Louise asked.\n
\nDr Who’s eyes moved from Tom to the screen above the bed. ‘If I understand these readings correctly it seems that the constable has a very nasty bump on the head. Yes,’ he mused thoughtfully, ‘that is a very nasty bump. But,’ he smiled at Louise, ‘it seems that he simply has a concussion. Yes, nasty, but he’ll recover in time. He’ll be as right as ninepence in a few days.’\n
\n‘Are you sure?’ Louise asked. \n
\n‘Quite sure,’ Dr Who reassured her. ‘I think sleep is probably the best thing for him just, don’t you?’ He glanced at the readings again and touched his hand to the unconscious man’s forehead. ‘Yes, he’s got a little fever building, so a nice long rest will do him the world of good.’ He tapped the machine by Tom’s bed. ‘And this splendid machine will monitor his progress. It’s almost an electronic doctor. All it needs is a Gladstone bag and some striped trousers.’ He patted the machine approvingly. ‘I think we should leave it to do its job and see what we can do for the other patients.’\n
\nLouise made no attempt to move. ‘I’ll stay with him.’\n
\nDr Who’s lips twitched into an understanding smile. ‘As you wish, my dear.’\n
\nVanessa moved a high stool across to the bedside for her friend. ‘This will be more comfortable.’\n

\nLouise smiled at the gesture. ‘Thanks.’ She eased herself onto the stool and sat watching Tom’s unmoving face.\n
\nDr Who had already moved across to the next patient and was deciphering the readings. He hummed and tutted in concern. \n
\n‘What’s wrong with him, Grandfather?’ Susan asked.\n
\nThe man’s skin was a dull, waxy grey with black vein-like markings reaching across its surface. Dr Who plucked a magnifying glass and bent over the unconscious patient, peering intently at the skin and its markings.\n
\n‘Fascinating,’ Dr Who clucked. ‘Absolutely fascinating.’\n
\nVanessa had been reading a small screen at the end of the bed. ‘It says here that this is Dr Parkinson, the moonbase’s own doctor.’\n
\n‘Yes,’ Dr Who said absently. ‘It seems that he was the first person in the base to be infected with whatever this is.’\n
\n‘Do you think the infection started here?’ Susan asked.\n
\nDr Who patted his grand-daughter’s shoulder proudly. ‘Solid thinking, Susie dear. Very logical. I’m not convinced it did spring from here, though.’\n
\nSusan frowned at her hypothesis being rejected. ‘Why not?’\n
\nDr Who moved across to the next patient. ‘Because this chap hasn’t been anywhere near Dr Parkinson in a fortnight. He was at a local colony helping them to repair their solar mirrors.’\n
\nSusan reluctantly conceded that her grandfather was right. ‘Then where did it come from?’ \n
\n‘I’m not sure,’ Dr Who admitted, ‘but I think we should find out, don’t you?’\n
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\nDr Martens’ work area on the raised level was dominated by computers, display monitors and all manner of technical equipment. Despite the fact that he couldn’t begin to recognise or even work out the purpose of most of the machines, Jim didn’t feel out of his depth. He felt comfortable surrounded by technology and numbers. It was just the way his mind worked. Everyone in his family was made the same way. They had all grown up either living with Dr Who or visiting him most days. They had all worked with him to a greater or lesser extent in the construction of Tardis. Much of the complex mathematics involved had been done by Jim, but he had also thrown himself into the mechanical side of bringing those equations to life. \n
\nSitting with Dr Martens, Jim quickly began to understand the purpose of the equipment around him. He liked the astronomer. She was competent, intelligent and said what she thought. She was also clearly loyal to her crewmates. The first thing she had said when were in position at her work station had been to defend the moonbase’s commander. ‘Don’t worry about Commander Hobson. It’s all bluster. He’s a good man. He just forgets that he’s allowed to show it sometimes.’\n
\nA stream of figures began to scrawl across Jim’s monitor. ‘So these are the figures about whatever pulled your boyfriend’s station out of orbit?’\n

\nDr Martens' mouth opened and then closed again very quickly. She stared at him, opened her mouth to speak again and then closed it again.\n
\n'Got it,' Jim grinned. 'It's a goldfish. Do you do any other impressions?'\n
\nMartens leaned forward. 'How did you know?' she hissed urgently. 'We're keeping it quiet just now.'\n
\nJim gave something between an apologetic wince and a pained grimace. 'I think you're going to need to work on that. Both of you. He shines when he looks at you.'\n
\n'Really?'\n
\nJim nodded. 'You do exactly the same when you look at him.'\n
\nDr Martens tried not to smile. 'Do you think anyone else noticed?'\n
\n'Oh, no,' Jim answered quickly. 'I'm sure nobody did.'\n
\n'Good.'\n
\n'Except for everybody.'\n
\nThe astronomer winced. 'So much for keeping it a secret.'\n
\n'Look,' Jim said comfortingly, 'if everybody knows but they haven't said anything, that means they like and respect you enough to let you do this in your own time.'\n
\n'I suppose you're right,' Dr Martens conceded. 'We're keeping it low-key just now because of Terry's father.'\n
\nJim frowned curiously. 'Why? Doesn't he like you?' He really hoped that concerns about people of different races being in a relationship wouldn't be an issue in the future.\n
\n'Oh, he likes me well enough,' Dr Martens said, dispelling Jim's concerns, 'but he's a general in the United States army and he has his eyes on a higher position. Politics, you know?'\n
\n'Oh.' \n
\nThat explained a lot and Martens clarified further. 'Terry's worried his father would use us as a way to get more publicity when he tries to get the nomination to run for President later in the year. It's why Terry took the position on Zeus-1 station.'\n
\nJim nodded understandingly. 'What kind of a President do you think this General Cutler would be?'\n
\nGiselle Martens' face froze into a neutral mask. 'I'm not from America, so I can't vote in the election, which means I probably shouldn't comment on it.'\n
\nJim laughed out loud. 'I think you just did.'\n
\nMartens joined in the laughter. 'I did, didn't I? Let's just say I'm glad I don't have the chance to vote. It means I don't have to explain why I didn't vote for him.'\n
\n'I won't tell anyone,' Jim promised before turning his eyes back to the numbers which had stopped scrolling. 'That's the data in.'\n
\nMartens reached for the keyboard. 'I'll put it into the computer.'\n
\n'No need,' Jim answered, typing a set of co-ordinates into the open programme. 'This is the area to look in.'\n

\nGiselle Martens looked at Jim, sure he was having a joke at her expense. ‘Nobody can work those calculations in their head that quickly.’\n
\nJim shrugged. ‘Use your computer if you want.’\n
\nMartens kept her eyes on Jim but hit RETURN on her keyboard. ‘If you’re right...’\n
\nA pained yell from downstairs distracted them both from the discussion. They ran to the stairs and looked down. Hobson and Jules Benoit were standing over a crewman who had collapsed to the floor. The number 7 was emblazoned on his shoulder.\n
\n‘It’s Sergio,’ Martens said. They hurried down to offer help. ‘What is it?’ she asked.\n
\n‘Same as before,’ Hobson said. Sure enough, black lines had started to protrude and crawl across Sergio’s skin. Even as he watched, Jim saw the lines rise and bulge from the skin as they moved over his cheeks up to his temples and around his eyes.\n
\n‘Is it always like that?’ Jim asked.\n
\nHobson confirmed that it was. ‘Every time it’s exactly the same.’ The commander nudged Jules. ‘Get a couple of the men to move him to sickbay.’\n
\nJules waved Chen Lim over. ‘I’ll do it. Chen Lim, would you give me a hand?’\n
\nBetween them Jules and Chen Lim carried the stricken Sergio out of the Control Room, leaving a sombre atmosphere behind. Hobson moved quickly to get his crew’s focus back to the work at hand.\n
\n‘We’ve all got work to do,’ Hobson said loudly. ‘With some of the lads down with this illness we have to work extra hard to stay on top of the work. Remember, we control the world’s weather. Without us, crops could be devastated. Without us, coastal towns could disappear under water. It’s a big job and you’re the only team I would want doing it. So let’s get to it.’ Jim noticed for the first time that one of the walls of the room was actually some kind of transparent panel looking into another room. He only really saw it now because a man stood in the doorway wearing a strange kind of helmet-like apparatus on his head. Hobson called to the man, answering Jim’s unasked questions. ‘Gino, get back in there and keep the Gravitron calibrated.’ He clapped his hands. ‘Come on, we’re not on holiday.’\n
\nMartens turned and headed back up the steps. Jim followed. \n
\n‘What’s all that with the fancy helmet and the calibration?’ Jim asked. \n
\n‘The Gravitron is a very delicate piece of machinery,’ Martens explained. ‘It needs someone inside the control booth to monitor the subtle changes. Unfortunately there are gravity waves in there. That’s why they wear that headgear. If they didn’t have the helmets on, the gravity would destroy the fine veins in their brains.’\n
\n‘Nasty,’ Jim said with some feeling. He could imagine exactly how bad that damage would be.\n
\nMartens had resumed her seat and was getting back to work. ‘All right,’ she said. ‘The computer has finished its work. Let’s see how it compares with what you did in your...’ Her voice trailed off in disbelief. She checked and rechecked the display. ‘This is impossible,’ she said.\n

\n‘What is?’ Jim asked a bit too innocently, examining his fingernails. ‘Did I get my decimal point in the wrong place?’\n
\n‘No,’ Martens exclaimed. ‘You worked out the answer to six decimal places further than the computer.’\n
\n‘I know. I was showing off.’\n
\nMartens shook her head. ‘It’s impossible. Just... impossible.’ She pointed at the computers around them. ‘It cost trillions to develop and build these things. We could have saved a fortune by just hiring you.’\n
\nJim wrinkled his nose. ‘You couldn’t afford me. Besides, my uncle would be lost without me.’\n
\n‘What about the girl who looks at you with the big eyes?’ Martens asked. ‘The one who thinks the sun shines out of you?’\n
\nJim’s brash, cheeky confidence faded into a rather shy grin. ‘I think the same about her.’\n
\nMartens chose to let the matter drop and returned to work. ‘I have control of three telescopes,’ she said. ‘Now you worked out the direction of the gravitational force, I can turn a telescope on it.’ She swiped through a screen. ‘One of them is in the perfect position to take a look. It’ll only take a few minutes to alter angle and stabilise.’\n
\n‘Good,’ Jim nodded, ‘then we’ll see what’s out there.’\n
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\nThe sickbay doors opened noisily as Jules and Chen Lim carried the unconscious Sergio into the room.\n
\n‘Another one of the crew collapsed,’ Jules said, easing Sergio onto the nearest empty bed. ‘It’s turning into an epidemic.’\n
\nDr Who bustled to the bedside, easing Jules out of the way. ‘Let me see him.’\n
\nAs they watched, the black lines continued to grows more prominent, standing out more proudly from the skin and darkening in colour. \n
\n‘Fascinating,’ Dr Who said to himself. ‘Quite fascinating.’\n
\n‘Is that all you’ve got to say?’ Jules retorted angrily. ‘Our friends are ill, probably dying, and all you can say is “fascinating”?’\n
\n‘Hey!’ Susan protested. ‘That’s not fair.’\n
\n‘It’s all right, Susie,’ her grandfather placated her. ‘If these were my friends I should feel exactly the same way I imagine.’ He pointed at the black lines. ‘But the positioning of these markings is indeed fascinating, wouldn’t you say, Susie?’\n
\nSusan peered at them, fascinated. Her brow furrowed in concentration. ‘There’s something familiar... something...’\n
\n‘Say what you think,’ Dr Who encouraged ‘Don’t be nerv...’\n
\n‘Nerves!’ Susan said sharply. ‘These markings follow the nervous system.’\n
\n‘Precisely!’ Dr Who said triumphantly. ‘Whatever this terrible ailment is, it attacks the human nervous system suddenly and violently.’ He turned to Jules. ‘Tell me, Mr...’\n

\n‘Benoit,’ Jules answered. ‘Jules Benoit.’\n
\n‘You don’t sound like a Jules Benoit,’ Susan said. ‘You don’t have a French accent.’\n
\n‘French father, Welsh mother,’ Benoit answered. ‘Apparently I have a French accent when I speak French.’\n
\n‘Fascinating,’ Dr Who enthused. When faced with a problem he could be enthusiastic about almost anything. ‘But at the moment, perhaps you could tell me, does this sickbay have any research or laboratory facilities I might use?’\n
\n‘Of course.’ Jules led the old man to a darkened corner of the sickbay. He swiped his hand across a sensor bringing up the lights in that corner. Up a set of three steps, a small but very well equipped medical laboratory was enclosed behind transparent plastic walls. The door hissed and slid open as Jules approached. ‘Dr Parkinson is always doing experiments in here. He’s fascinated by the effects of exposure to space travel, and other unnatural environments like ours on the human body.’\n
\nDr Who nodded absently, moving quickly around the laboratory, examining the various pieces of equipment. ‘Do you think anything he is doing here might have caused the illness?’\n
\nJules Benoit was certain in his answer. ‘No. He wasn’t working with anything of this sort.’\n
\n‘So I see,’ said Dr Who, flipping through a few pages of handwritten notes he had picked up from the work surface. ‘His current interest is in the effects of the artificial gravity used inside the moonbase. Intriguing.’ He stopped and looked around. ‘This will do splendidly, Mr Benoit. Thank you so much. He ushered Benoit back down the few steps. ‘I shall contact you as soon as I learn anything. Meantime I should not keep you from your work. I imagine with so many of your friends in here that you are very busy.’\n
\n‘That’s true,’ Benoit agreed. He started to leave but stopped at the door. ‘Remember, if you find anything...’\n
\n‘I shall let you know,’ Dr Who assured him. \n
\nBenoit and Chen Lim left, closing the door behind them. Dr Who hurried to Susan and Vanessa. ‘Go after them,’ he said urgently. ‘Offer to be helpful, even if it is something as mundane as making coffee or something like that.’\n
\n‘What’s wrong?’ Susan said suspiciously. \n
\n‘I don’t know,’ Dr Who admitted, ‘and I do not like not knowing. This mysterious virus troubles me, as does how carefully it selects its victims. They did not mention that one of the men struck down is the head of security here. The sudden nature with which it attacks the nerves also concerns me. That does not strike me as normal or indeed natural. I would like you two to be my eyes and ears around the moonbase. Learn whatever you can.’\n
\n‘All right,’ Susan agreed, sounding a little reluctant.\n
\n‘Of course we will,’ Vanessa added. \n
\n‘Jolly good.’ Dr Who rubbed his hands together enthusiastically. ‘Now off you go, and remember – anything might be useful.’\n

\n‘We’ll remember,’ Susan said. She and Vanessa hurried out of the sickbay after Jules Benoit.\n
\nAfter checking on Tom and Louise, Dr Who set about programming the bedside medical units to start drawing blood samples. It was time to get some answers.\n
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\nOut beyond the orbit of the Moon, the space telescope Eratosthenes had accepted the commands relayed to it by Giselle Martens. The telescope was large, the size of a single decker bus, but it took only short bursts from the small thrusters arranged around the satellite to change its alignment so that it would study a different part of the heavens. Quietly and without any fuss, in everything from infra-red to ultra-violet, Eratosthenes began its search.\n
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\n‘Help? What can you do to help?’\n
\nSusan and Vanessa had caught up with Jules Benoit after he reached the Control Room. Their offer to help had been overheard by Hobson and he had responded in typically gruff manner, his Yorkshire accent becoming more pronounced as his long work shift wore on.\n
\n‘Well, I could reprogram your computers to run more efficiently,’ Susan answered cheekily – and honestly – before Vanessa calmed the waters.\n
\n‘But the Doctor suggested that with some of your crew missing you might be able to find a use for a few extra pairs of hands.’\n
\n“We are short on hands,’ Benoit reminded Hobson. ‘Ralph has been complaining that he’s having to do a supply run alone. Ideally it’s at least a two person job.’\n
\nHobson relented and chose to delegate the task. ‘All right, Jules, you’re second-in-command here. Regulations say I have to listen to you now and again. Crew deployment should fall under your purview anyway so I’m putting it in your hands.’ With that, he turned and headed back to a computer terminal.\n
\n‘All right,’ Benoit said to Susan and Vanessa. ‘Ralph – that’s Number Fourteen – could do with a hand. I’ll get somebody to show you where it is.’\n
\n‘No need,’ Vanessa said politely. ‘We’ll find the way.\n
\nSusan nodded. ‘The big map on the wall in the corridor is a giveaway.’\n
\n‘Susan!’ Vanessa nudged the younger girl. ‘I was trying to make us look clever.’\n
\nSusan had already turned and was heading back to the door. ‘Vanessa, we are clever. We don’t have to prove it.’\n
\nVanessa smiled and turned to follow Susan. Glancing up she saw Jim working at a computer terminal on the upper level. He had obviously caught sight of her too and gave a little wave. She smiled and waved back before hurrying after Susan\n
\nOut in space, orbiting the Earth and Moon even further out than the Eratosthenes telescope, station Zeus-1 was being pulled by gravity again. \n
\nCaptain Terry Cutler was marshalling his command staff in the old station to counter the effects of the mysterious pull. ‘I need details, Joe,’ he said to the tall Jamaican scientists, whose

hands flew with the grace of a concert pianist across the computer keys.\n
\n‘Same as before,’ Joe answered, ‘only the pull is at least twice as powerful.’\n
\n‘Same direction?’ Terry Cutler asked.\n
\nJoe nodded. ‘Pretty much, yes.’\n
\nAnother voice interjected. Ilsa Larsson, the Swedish environmental engineer, was at the communications station. ‘Message coming in for you Terry?’\n
\n‘Giselle Martens?’ Cutler said hopefully.\n
\nLarsson shook her head. ‘Your father. He’s at the Antarctica Base.’\n
\n‘Ice Cap Base?’ Terry frowned. ‘What’s he doing there?’\n
\nLarsson shrugged. ‘Ask him yourself. I’m putting him on screen now.’\n
\nThe large monitor in front of Terry flickered into life. An older man appeared on the screen a moment later. He looked ten years older than Terry rather than the twenty-five years which was the truth of the matter. General Cutler was healthy, athletic and had a full head of thick dark hair. However, even more than being just physically imposing, General Cutler’s energy, ambition, drive and personality filled the screen in the same way he tended to dominate every room he was in.\n
\n‘What’s going on up there, son?’ General Cutler asked. His voice was deep and rasping. ‘Your readings get relayed down here. We can see you’re struggling to hold orbit.’\n
\n‘I know, General,’ Terry answered. He was going to keep this report professional. He was on duty. That meant he was reporting to a superior office not talking to his father. ‘We’re working on stabilising that now.’\n
\n‘Keep us informed on how that goes,’ General Cutler answered. ‘We’ll provide any assistance we can.’\n
\n‘Thank you, General,’ Terry replied. ‘We really appreciate that. All of us.’\n
\n‘You can all show your appreciation by coming back in one piece,’ the General growled.\n
\nTerry had no doubt that his father really did love him, and that he really did want every man and woman on the Zeus-1 to return home safely, but he also knew that this transmission would somehow make its way into the hands of newsvid agencies, who would show it over and over when his political run started, to show that this was a man of duty, a man with a family who served the public, and a man who cared about his family. The General’s political publicists would have a field day.\n
\n‘We’ll all do our very best to come back safely, General,’ Terry promised.\n
\n‘Have you any idea what’s causing your troubles?’ General Cutler asked.\n
\nTerry nodded. ‘It’s some kind of gravitational pull,’ he said.\n
\n‘The Gravitron?’\n
\nTerry shook his head. ‘I’ve spoken to the moonbase about the Gravitron. They assure me that has nothing to do with what’s happening to us.’\n
\nGeneral Cutler humphed. ‘They would. I think I’ll take a look into that myself.’\n

\nThat was definitely played for the gallery, Terry thought. ‘No need. The moonbase’s astronomer is looking into the source of the gravitational anomaly. They’ll tell us what they find out.’\n
\n‘They’ll tell me as well,’ General Cutler promised. \n
\nTerry Cutler sighed sadly. Yes, his father was playing to the camera. ‘I’m sure they will,’ he said. ‘I need to get back to this so we can stabilise our orbit. Zeus-1 out.’\n
\nIlsa Larsson read the direction of the conversation and killed the link.\n
\n‘Thanks, Ilsa,’ Terry said. ‘Joe, have you programmed the thrusters?’\n
\nJoe nodded. Concern was etched onto his face. ‘It’s going to use a lot more fuel than last time.’\n
\n‘How much more?’\n
\n‘Thirty-nine percent,’ Joe supplied.\n
\nThe answer stunned Terry. The power requirement had quadrupled in a single orbit of the Earth. ‘What in the hell is out there?’ he whispered.\n
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\n‘I don’t believe it,’ Giselle Martens breathed. She couldn’t take her eyes from the monitors. Every one of them told the same. The facts were undeniable. ‘But it’s impossible,’ she said quietly. ‘Impossible!’\n
\nJim had also been shocked by the telescope’s findings but he had recovered more quickly. ‘It’s true,’ he said, carefully checking each reading. ‘There’s no doubt.’ He punched a control on the internal communications system. ‘Doctor? You should get up here. We’ve found... Well, you can see for yourself when you get here.’\n
\nGiselle Martens enlarged the image on the main screen. There was no way of denying the evidence in front of her eyes. She pushed away from the keyboard and hurried halfway down the steps to the Control Room. ‘Commander Hobson,’ she called. ‘Can I see you up here, please?’\n
\nHobson looked up, surprised. Giselle Martens rarely invited anyone to visit her workspace. ‘What is it?’ he asked. ‘I’m busy here. We just had another drop in pressure.’\n
\n‘I really think you need to see this,’ Martens said. She turned and hurried back up to her work station without another word.’\n
\n‘I’ve got a clearer image,’ Jim said. \n
\nHe was right. The image on screen changed, showing a more detailed version of the image.\n
\nMartens turned, hearing footsteps on the stairs. ‘What is it?’ Hobson asked irritably. \n
\nJules Benoit was at Hobson’s shoulder and Martens was surprised to see old Dr Who easing past Hobson to join Jim.\n
\n‘Yes, what has you so excited, Jim, my boy?’ the old man asked.\n
\nJim turned to Martens. ‘It’s your telescope,’ he said.\n
\nMartens scrolled through the latest images from Eratosthenes. ‘We got the data from the Zeus-1 station,’ she said, ‘and fed the co-ordinates Jim worked out from that data into one of the

telescopes. This is what’s causing the gravitational anomalies affecting Zeus-1.’ She swiped an even clearer picture up towards the main screen. A blue-white ball hung against the darkness of space. \n
\n‘A planet?’ Hobson asked. ‘It’s got an atmosphere. Is Venus passing close?’\n
\n‘It’s not Venus,’ Martens answered. ‘It’s not any of the planets known in our solar system. It’s new.’\n
\nJim looked at the figures associated with the images. ‘And it’s heading this way,’ he said. ‘It’s heading this way very fast.’\n

\nCHAPTER THREE\n
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\nThe Silver Giant\n
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\n‘A new planet?’ Hobson sounded disbelieving. ‘How can there be a new planet just moving through space like that?’\n
\nDr Who answered quickly. ‘Oh, it’s not unusual.’\n
\n‘Thank you, Tom Jones,’ Jim quipped before grinning sheepishly. ‘Sorry. Bad joke.’\n
\nGiselle Martens continued as if Jim had not spoken. ‘Rogue planets or orphan planets are thought to be reasonably common in the universe. It’s possible that Neptune and a few of the moons of the outer gas giant planets are orphan planets that were caught by gravity and spun into orbits inside our solar system.’\n
\n‘Perfectly true,’ Dr Who agreed, ‘but I doubt if any of those are rocky worlds with atmospheres as thick as this new planet we are looking at. It would be stripped away as the planet travelled interstellar space.’\n
\n‘You’re right,’ Giselle agreed. ‘That is a very thick atmosphere. I wonder what size that planet is.’\n
\n‘Same as Earth,’ Jim answered. ‘I was able to work it out from its speed and the stars it blocks out.’\n
\n‘Earth size?’ Hobson said, shocked. ‘No wonder Zeus-1 is being pulled about in orbit.’\n
\n‘I’ll tell you something else about that planet,’ Jim said slowly.\n
\n‘What?’ Dr Who asked.\n
\n‘Its angle of approach brought it past the Sun,’ Jim answered, ‘in a course that would cause it to be hidden from view from Earth for the longest possible time.’\n
\n‘Coincidence?’ Hobson asked.\n
\n‘And the other thing,’ Jim went on, ‘is that despite moving away from the Sun, it’s accelerating.’\n
\n‘What?’ Giselle asked. She shook her head. ‘The Sun’s gravity...’\n
\n‘Even if the Sun’s gravity acted as a slingshot to speed it up on the way in, that same gravity would be a drag slowing it down as it moved away,’ Jim answered, ‘but it’s getting faster.’\n
\nGiselle Martens shook her head in bewilderment. ‘And that really should be impossible.’ She turned to Hobson. ‘So, do you want to tell the Controller about this or will I?’\n
\n‘No,’ Dr Who interrupted. ‘Before you contact anybody I have one more question, and it is for you, Jim.’\n
\n‘Yes?’ Jim answered. ‘I’m fairly sure I know what you’ll ask but... ask.’\n
\n‘I’m sure you do know, my boy.’ Dr Who gave a proud little smile before his face became serious again. ‘What is the trajectory of that planet? Where is it going?’\n

\n‘Here,’ Jim answered simply. ‘It’s coming here.’\n
\nDr Who turned to Hobson. ‘Commander, you must contact your superiors immediately. If I am correct the Earth can expect visitors from that world at any time.’\n
\n \n
\nDr Who had been correct in his assumption that there would be visitors from the mysterious new planet, but he had been wrong about their destination. The first of their ships had landed not on Earth but on its dusty, grey satellite. The ship had come to rest behind a rise less than half a mile from Tardis and less than two miles from the moonbase. From the outside the ship seemed quiet and still, but the inhabitants were far from inactive.\n
\n \n
\nTom Campbell’s eyes flickered. He was feverish, a sheen of sweat glistening on his forehead and his eyes rolled in an unfocused, glassy way. His mouth opened but it was dry and he couldn’t speak. He wasn’t aware of the weight on his chest that was Louise’s head. She had fallen into a doze and was using his chest and shoulder as a pillow.\n
\nThere was a movement in the... What room was he in? Where was he? He tried to speak but no words came out of his mouth.\n
\nA shadow fell across his bed. He tried to focus on the huge figure as it stood still at the end of his bed before walking silently to the bed containing Dr Parkinson. The quilted sheet was thrown aside and Parkinson lifted from the bed as easily as if he were a doll. Parkinson was carried away under one arm. A door in the shadowy end of the sickbay hissed open and the giant figure moved through.\n
\nThe sound of the door had roused Louise and she drowsily saw the giant silver figure going through the door with Parkinson carried carelessly under one arm. She opened her mouth to scream but bit down on the impulse. If she screamed she would only attract attention.\n
\nThe door hissed shut.\n
\nLouise ran to the internal communications system and punched the button for the Control Room.\n
\n \n
\n‘What do you mean there’s a new planet?’\n
\nGeneral Cutler’s disbelief was obvious even over the distance that projected him onto the Control Room’s viewscreen. ‘How can there suddenly be a new planet?’\n
\n‘Well, of course, the planet itself is not new,’ Dr Who said. ‘It must be billions of years old and...’ He stopped talking as Jim nudged him meaningfully. ‘I’ll let the resident astronomer explain,’ he tailed off self-consciously.\n
\nGiselle Marten spoke to the camera, aware that she was talking to both men on the split display: General Cutler at the polar base and Terry Cutler aboard the Zeus-1. ‘Rogue planets are not uncommon in the cosmos. They aren’t tethered to a solar system and just drift through space from system to system, perhaps even from galaxy to galaxy. They’re nomads.’\n

\n‘And this nomad is headed our way?’ General Cutler demanded.\n
\n‘And that’s what is affecting our orbit?’ his son added. \n
\nGiselle Martens nodded. ‘Yes.’\n
\n‘How close will it pass?’ Terry Cutler asked.\n
\n‘We’re not sure,’ Martens answered. ‘Some of the readings... The planet’s not behaving in the way we’d expect it to.’\n
\n‘What are you talking about?’ General Cutler demanded.\n
\nGiselle Martens was not fond of being barked at like a recruit of parade and she met fire with fire. ‘If you’ll let me finish, General, I was about to explain why it’s unusual.’\n
\nDespite the danger the situation had placed him in, Terry Cutler struggled to keep a smirk off of his face, and everybody noticed that fact.\n
\nGeneral Cutler cleared his throat and scowled. ‘Very well. Go ahead.’\n
\n‘The planet is accelerating when it should be slowing down,’ Martens said, keeping the explanation as simple as possible. ‘It passed the Sun and should have been slowed by the Sun’s gravity. Instead it is speeding up as it approaches Earth, far more than can be explained by Earth’s gravity.’\n
\nJim hurried down the steps carrying a small, flat screen. He showed his uncle the screen first. ‘That’s not all,’ Jim said.\n
\n‘Indeed not,’ Dr Who agreed, indicating for Jim to pass the screen to Martens. \n
\nShe took the screen, a frown furrowing her brow. ‘That is absolutely impossible,’ she said slowly. ‘Completely and utterly impossible.’\n
\n‘What is?’ Terry Cutler beat his father to the question. ‘Giselle? What’s wrong? What is impossible?’\n
\nMartens looked at Dr Who. ‘You’re not surprised.’\n
\nThe old man shook his head. ‘No,’ he said. ‘I am not.’\n
\n‘Giselle,’ Terry prompted on screen.\n
\nHis father tried to reassert himself. ‘What’s so impossible?’ he roared.\n
\nThe answer came from Dr Who. ‘It seems that this new planet is changing course and swinging out into an orbit around the Earth. It is also decelerating its progress but increasing its rotation to match that of the Earth.’\n
\n‘All of which is impossible,’ Giselle Martens repeated. \n
\n‘No, my dear,’ Dr Who countered, ‘it is not impossible. Unnatural I will agree, and requiring of immensely advanced technology and science, but not impossible.’\n
\n‘Technology?’ General Cutler sounded confused. ‘Science and technology?’\n
\n‘That is what I said,’ Dr Who confirmed.\n
\n‘Are you saying that planet is inhabited?’ General Cutler demanded.\n
\nDr Who nodded. ‘That is precisely what I am saying.’\n
\n‘You’re crazy, old man,’ Cutler thundered. ‘Hobson, what are you doing allowing that old fool in

your base?'\n
\n'Hey!' Jim bristled at the insults aimed at his uncle.\n
\nEven Dr Who showed a rare trace of real annoyance. 'Sir,' he said stiffly, 'I do not care for your tone.'\n
\n'And I don't care for your face,' General Cutler snapped.\n
\n'Nor I yours,' Dr Who replied tetchily. 'I have found that even the most closed military minds can learn facts by using the simple technique of closing their mouths and opening their ears. This young lady is one of the foremost figures in her field or she would not be in this position. I would suggest that you listen to her expertise.'\n
\n'Would you now? General Cutler replied coldly. 'Would you indeed?'\n
\nDr Who refused to be cowed. 'Yes, I would.'\n
\nThe situation might have deteriorated into a stand-off, a battle of two strong-willed mem, but Terry Cutler broke the impasse. 'Tell us what you know, Giselle.'\n
\nBefore Martens could speak, Nils hurried to Commander Hobson's side. 'There's something happening in Sickbay,' he said urgently. 'The girl, Louise, she said there's something down there, and one of the men has disappeared from his bed.'\n
\n'What?' Hobson was already striding for the door. 'Jules, you deal with things up here.'\n
\nDr Who was running after the commander. 'You stay here, too, Jim. You may be able to help.'\n
\nGeneral Cutler glared at the remainder of the group from the screen. 'What kind of circus are you running? What's going on up there? \n
\nGiselle Martens pulled a deep breath, ready to deliver an angry reply.\n
\n'Count to ten,' Jim said softly. 'Count to ten then answer.'\n
\nGiselle Martens glowered at the screen but had to accept the sense of her new friend's words. One, two, three...\n
\n \n
\nCommander Hobson burst into Sickbay a step ahead of Dr Who. The old man had easily kept up with the younger commander who seemed considerably more winded that the old scientist.\n
\n'What is it, my dear?' Dr Who asked, hurrying to Louise's side.\n
\nShe pointed at the shadowed door at the end of the room. 'Something went in there,' she said.\n
\n'Something?' Hobson asked. 'What do you mean?'\n
\n'It was huge,' Louise answered. She shivered at the memory of the giant figure having to bend at the waist. 'It had to stoop to go through the doorway. It was carrying something under one arm. I'm sure it must have been the missing man.' \n
\nDr Who was shuffling nervously towards the door. Hobson followed close behind. His cynicism had faded, replaced by an anxious curiosity. 'You didn't hear this... whatever it was?' he asked Louise.\n
\nShe shook her head, slightly embarrassed. 'I fell into a doze,' she admitted. 'I was asleep. I

only woke up when I heard that door open and saw that giant silver thing go through.'\n
\n'Silver?'' Dr Who asked. 'You didn't mention silver before.'\n
\nLouise apologised. 'Didn't I? I'm sorry. But yes, it was silver.'\n
\n'And what is this room?' Dr Who asked Hobson.\n
\nThe answer was immediate. 'A medical supply cupboard. It's pretty small, as I remember.'\n
\n'And is there another door to this cupboard?' Dr Who continued.\n
\n'No,' Hobson answered, 'only that one.'\n
\nDr Who's hand stopped a few inches from the door's handle. 'Are you sure about that?' he asked uneasily. 'I mean, these things do change, you know. Last minute alterations in the design plans?' he suggested almost hopefully. 'No?'\n
\nHobson's head shook again. 'Not in the Sickbay.'\n
\n'Oh.' Dr Who straightened his back and gripped the door handle. 'I suppose we had better take a look anyway, then,' he said with little enthusiasm. 'Hadn't we?'\n
\nOne of the beds that was almost in darkness was being repaired. Hobson grabbed a metal bar from it and held it ready to swing. He nodded at Dr Who. 'Now.'\n
\nDr Who counted down softly. 'Three, two, one...' he yanked the door open.\n
\nAn empty room no larger than an average box room stared back at them. The room had shelving on most of both side walls and a large medical freezer and refrigerator on the facing wall, but it was silent and empty as if untouched in days.\n
\n'It's empty,' Hobson said bluntly. 'There's nothing here.'\n
\n'So I see.' Dr Who sounded almost relieved. 'Which means you can put that rather nasty-looking metal pole down, don't you think?'\n
\n'Oh, I suppose so.' Hobson lowered the bar. He looked around again. 'Definitely empty.'\n
\n'Definitely,' Dr Who agreed. 'There's nothing here.' He turned and ushered Hobson out of the room, closing the door behind them.\n
\n'So,' Hobson said to Louise, 'what's all this about? There's nothing in there.'\n
\n'But I saw it go in there.' Louise insisted. 'I know I did.'\n
\n'I believe you,' Dr Who assured his niece. 'Tell me, Mr Hobson, did you happen to see the jars on the shelves in that store room?'\n
\nA frown creased Hobson's brow. 'What about them?'\n
\n'Did you happen to see that they were all shaking or showing ripples? Signs that there had been recent movement in the room.'\n
\nHobson considered for a moment, thinking of the room, before speaking. 'You're right, but there was nothing in there.'\n
\nDr Who's hand lifted. Gripped between two fingers was a small square of silvery material. 'This was caught in the door's locking mechanism. I do not recognise this material as being like anything else I have seen here before.'\n
\nHobson scrutinised the material. 'I don't recognise it either. Any idea what it is?'\n

\nDr Who’s lips pursed as if he was chewing a toffee. ‘No,’ he answered finally. ‘It appears to be a flexible metal of some kind.’ He twisted the fragment in his hand, watching it revert to its initial flat state within a second. ‘Very flexible and malleable.’\n
\n‘Can you find out what that is?’ Hobson asked.\n
\n‘I can try,’ Dr Who agreed. ‘The laboratory here will be most helpful.’\n
\n‘You’re not saying we should stay here,’ Louise protested. ‘That thing, whatever it is, went through that door.’ She pointed at the door to the store room.\n
\nHobson quickly keyed in a code to the door’s control panel. ‘That’s it magnetically sealed. Nothing gets through that door without the code, and only I know that.’\n
\nThe communications buzzed again. Louise was closest and answered the call. ‘Hello.’\n
\nJules Benoit’s voice crackled through the speaker. ‘Can you get Commander Hobson back up here? The planet’s gravity is affecting the Gravitron.’\n
\nHobson was already on the move towards the door. ‘Find out what that is, Doctor,’ he said. ‘I want Dr Parkinson back. I want to know what’s going on.’ \n
\nThe door closed behind the commander and Louise glanced back at the store room before returning to her uncle’s side. ‘Do you know what’s going on here, Doctor?’ she asked.\n
\nDr Who answered slowly. ‘I’m not certain, but I have some very nasty suspicions.’\n
\nSomething Benoit had said finally registered with Louise. ‘Wait a moment. Benoit mentioned a new planet. What new planet is he talking about?’\n
\nDr Who patted his niece’s hand and peered for a moment at Tom, who was still asleep. ‘We do have quite a bit for you to catch up on, don’t we?’\n
\n \n
\nRalph Hulse liked to complain. Ralph was an engineer. In fact, he was one of the foremost engineers of his generation. He had been involved in the design of the weather control moonbase and had travelled to the lunar surface to play a major role first in its construction and then in the installation of its technical equipment. When the moonbase was operational it was obvious that Ralph should be offered the role of Chief Engineer and he was happy to accept that role. Unfortunately for Ralph, he had proved to be rather too good at his job. The moonbase had been built extraordinarily well and its systems very seldom failed. When minor errors happened, the automatic repair systems took care of them. This left Ralph with very little to keep him occupied. He tried to fill his time with projects such as designing and building improved solar panels and working out the basics of a more powerful transmitter relay system which would involve satellites being placed in concentric bands orbiting the Sun. They would act as relays, boosting messages travelling from the ever increasing number of outposts mankind built as he spread throughout the solar system. At one point, Ralph had been sure that his work on the moonbase would be the efforts for which he would most be remembered. More recently, though, he had become convinced that the relay network would be his lasting legacy. He had designed a remarkable thing.\n

\nAnd now Commander Hobson had him running errands picking up supplies for the kitchen and for various other departments. Ralph knew that he was a genius and he knew that he had an ego. He also knew that he was not willing to be a skivvy. When the next staff rotation came round he would ship out back to Earth and get his new project under way. Until then he would have to bide his time and not rock the boat. It would be harder to get people to listen to future projects if he got himself a reputation as a troublemaker. So all he could do was obey orders and keep his head down... and occasionally vent his unhappiness by being a grouch to some of his colleagues.\n
\nHis current task was to restock the kitchen. He had to do that twice a week. It was a two-man job but with people coming down with whatever illness was doing the rounds he had to work alone. He stared at his long list of foodstuffs. It would take forever to gather all of that together. To make things worse, two of the light panels in the store were malfunctioning. The autorepairs had them scheduled for later in the afternoon. Well, that was absolutely no use to Ralph. The job needed done quickly. He would have a damned good moan about it to somebody though.\n
\nHe heard a movement.\n
\nThere was someone else in the store room. He squinted, peering into the dark and the shadows at the edge of the store room. The store was wide enough for twelve racks of provisions to run from the floor to the ceiling. It was just too dark for him to see much past the first few racks. There was another noise, though, a sort of hissing. What the devil was that? The base used liquids and gases in pipes to regulate temperatures which could range from 120 degrees Celsius when in sunlight to 270 degrees Celsius below freezing when the Moon’s surface was in darkness. The pipes kept temperatures at a comfortable level for the base’s crew, but Ralph knew that there were no pipes around the store. He followed the sound and found one of the paper sacks of sugar spilling a waterfall of sugar onto the floor. That was the source of the noise.\n
\n‘Oh, man,’ Ralph complained, ‘don’t tell me we got rats up here on the Moon.’ He flipped the sugar upright and stopped the flow. Cleaning up the mess on the floor was going to be annoying. He wouldn’t mind but it didn’t even taste like real sugar.\n
\nThere was another noise. Something moving behind him. He turned quickly. Was that a shadow moving? Where would the light be coming from? Could he work out the person’s position from the shadow?\n
\n‘Hey!’ he called. ‘Whoever you are, stop messing about. Come out and stop messing around. I’ve got work to do.’ There was no reply. ‘Come on. Stop playing stupid games.’\n
\nWas that another sound of movement?\n
\nHe had lost track of where it was coming from.\n
\nHe had lost track of where he was.\n
\nIt was somewhere around him.\n
\nWhere was it?\n

\nA sudden bright light made Ralph wince and screw up his eyes. There was a silhouette, an odd shape.\n
\n‘Who are you? What are you?’\n
\n‘Well that’s a bit rude,’ a polite, refined young woman’s voice said.\n
\n‘It really is,’ a younger girl’s voice said. ‘How would you like us to be rude about you?’\n
\nRalph squinted. His eyes can become a little more accustomed to the sudden light and he realised that it was two of the newcomers he had seen with Chen Lim earlier. The young girl and one of the attractive twenty-something year old women. \n
\n‘Was that you?’ Ralph demanded, covering his embarrassment at being so afraid with a show of anger. ‘Did you burst that bag of sugar?’\n
\n‘How could it be us?’ the older girl argued. She sounded as irritated as Ralph.\n
\n‘Of course it wasn’t us,’ the younger one added. ‘We only just got here.’\n
\nRalph wasn’t placated. ‘What are you two doing here anyway?’\n
\nThe younger one answered. ‘Jules Benoit sent us to help you. I’m Susan and this is Vanessa, by the way.’\n
\n‘Are you now?’ \n
\n‘Yes,’ the one named Vanessa answered, trying very hard to stay polite. ‘It’s nice to meet you, Ralph. Now, please, tell us how we can help.’\n
\nRalph thought for a moment. So, Benoit had sent some help, had he? Maybe he wasn’t such a useless poser after all. He had always dismissed Benoit as one of those men who never met a mirror they didn’t like and who would have been eyeing up this Vanessa. Maybe he had misjudged Benoit.\n
\n‘Here,’ Ralph said, handing a printed sheet of paper to Vanessa. He pushed his trolley over and Susan took control of it. ‘You get these and I’ll go and get myself another trolley so I can get the other half.’\n
\nVanessa smiled and Ralph felt his antipathy to these newcomers disappear. They were genuinely friendly and really were here to help. ‘That sounded splendid, she said.\n
\nRalph turned and went in search of the second trolley. It was just his luck that it was usually stored in what was currently the darkest part of the store room. He would have to use a flashlight to find the actual provisions. He continued talking as he went into the darkness. ‘The system is pretty simple,’ he called back to his new helpers. ‘Each item has three numbers assigned to it. Aisle number then shelf and then finally its number on that shelf.’\n
\n‘Thank you,’ Vanessa called back. ‘We’ve got it.’\n
\n‘It was actually pretty obvious,’ Susan added.\n
\nRalph sniffed. Well wasn’t she the cocky one? He had never been fond of children. Even when he had been one himself he hadn’t liked them much.\n
\nAha!\n
\nHis hand had found the handle of the second trolley. Now, unless he was mistaken there was

a stock of emergency lamps on this aisle. He could use one of those. He was in pitch darkness now. None of the light managed to reach this far. It wouldn’t matter when he had that lamp, though. He reached out with a hand and found the shelves. He kept his hand on the shelf as he made his way along the aisle slowly, trying to remember exactly where the lamps were kep...\n
\nWhat the devil was that? \n
\nHe had walked onto something solid in the middle of the aisle and fallen flat on his backside. It had been cold and metal and unmoving. Had somebody just dumped something in the aisle. There would be hell to pay if they had.\n
\nRalph scrambled to his feet and reached out a hand. There. He had found a lamp. He plucked it from the shelf and turned it on.\n
\nA huge silver figure stood impassively in front of him. It stood seven feet tall and was the shape of a man with two arms, two legs and a head, but it was made of an entirely silver material with some odd apparatus that almost looked like an accordion on its chest. But its face... it was that terrible face that told Ralph that this thing was completely evil and inhuman. The face was almost flat, only slightly curved. There was no nose, and blank, disc-like eyes were situated above a single slit in the place of a mouth. The most alarming thing about the face was that the eyes had an odd, teardrop shape at their corners. The sides of the head were ridged and bizarre handles looped up from where the ears would roughly be to meet at the top of the head in some kind of lamp or weapon at the top of the forehead area.\n
\nRalph stared in shock, unable to speak. He tried to call out. A spark of lightning shot from the lamp on the metal creature’s head. Ralph slumped and the metal giant moved with extraordinary speed, catching him before he fell to the ground.\n
\nWith surprising delicacy, the metal creature operated the control, switching off the lamp.\n
\n‘Ralph?’ Vanessa’s voice came from nearby. ‘Ralph, some of these items seem to be in the wrong place.’\n
\nThe lights above flickered and came back to life.\n
\n‘Ralph?’\n
\nWhen Vanessa appeared around the corner of that final aisle, she found it completely empty apart from the second trolley in which sat Ralph’s half of the list. \n
\nRalph and the metal giant were both gone.\n

\nCHAPTER FOUR\n
\n \n
\nThe First Casualties\n
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\n‘You have to do better, Hobson.’ \n
\nCommander Hobson struggled with his temper and bit off a vicious reply to Controller Rinberg, the Gravitron project’s ultimate leader on Earth. He replied in a more controlled manner. ‘As you’re aware, Controller Rinberg, this new planet is causing the gravitational disturbances. Those are causing the trouble on Earth, not the Gravitron.’\n
\nRinberg’s nasal, superior voice answered. ‘But the Gravitron is the only chance we have of dealing with the trouble being caused by this new world. You must control the global tides.’\n
\n‘How?’ Hobson demanded. We can’t control all of the world’s tides at the same time. We need to be in direct line of sight to affect things and we can only see a part of the Earth at a time.’\n
\n‘You just have to find a way,’ Rinberg answered without a hint of empathy or understanding. ‘You have no idea how difficult it is down here trying to deal with World Gov politicians. You simply must get this done, Hobson. Rinberg out.’ The line went dead.\n
\n‘I’d love it if somebody really did get Rinberg out,’ Hobson muttered.\n
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\n \n
\n ‘Is there still no sign of Ralph?’ Vanessa asked.\n
\nSusan scowled furiously. ‘He’s skived off and left us to do all of his work.’\n
\n‘Maybe he was called away to do something else?’ Vanessa suggested. ‘They are short on staff.’\n
\n‘Maybe,’ Susan said, ‘or maybe he’s just bone idle and he’s sitting somewhere with a cup of tea and a chocolate biscuit.’\n
\n‘We won’t learn much if we don’t meet any of the crew,’ Vanessa said. She patted their trolley, which was now full. ‘One of us should take this trolley to the kitchen.’\n
\nSusan looked at the heavy trolley. ‘Do you want to do it?’ she asked hopefully.\n
\n‘All right,’ Vanessa grinned. ‘I’ll take the trolley. You start filling the other one.’\n
\n‘All right,’ Susan agreed.\n
\nVanessa pushed the laden trolley out into the corridor. ‘I won’t be long,’ she called before the door slid shut again.\n
\nSusan looked at the list in her hand. It was the list Ralph should have filled. She started moving along the aisles, plucking various packages from shelves and dropping them into the trolley. She moved to the next item on her lift. Parcels of herbs were high on a shelf well out of her reach. There was a set of steps a few aisles away but she couldn’t be bothered going to gather them. It was a waste of effort when she could simply climb the shelving rack. She

clambered up onto the third shelf, reaching for the appropriately numbered parcel.\n
\nThe lights went out.\n
\n‘Oh, brilliant,’ Susan muttered. How could she finish the job in the pitch darkness?\n
\nSomething moved.\n
\nSomewhere in the store, something metal – a panel or something similar – moved.\n
\nSusan’s head spun. She could see absolutely nothing. There was something. Was that a footstep? A heavy footstep? Yes, she was sure of it. There was something about the step... something ominous, something unsettling. She had to get to the door, to get out. But where was the footstep coming from? Yes, she heard another footstep. Was it Ralph? No, it was too heavy for him. It didn’t sound natural. It just didn’t sound right. She couldn’t tell the direction it was coming from. To get to the door she had to get to the end of the aisle, turn right and run to the door control. Would that route take her straight into whoever made those footsteps? She heard another footstep. It was closer. Which way should she run? There was no way to know. Either way could lead to her being caught. Which way?\n
\nAnother footstep.\n
\nSusan climbed. She moved quickly, climbing fast. She pulled herself up until she could lie flat on the top shelf. She was nine or ten feet above the floor now. Metal struts secured the shelves to the ceiling as well as the floor.\n
\nShe had to breathe very shallow breaths. She wanted to suck in lungfuls of breath but she might be heard. She controlled her breathing. Small, shallow breaths.\n
\nMore footsteps. Something heavy moving slowly, lightly. Where was it? Behind her? Yes, it was in the same aisle she was. It was moving slowly, stalking, searching. It walked a few steps. Stopped. Walked a few more steps and stopped again. Was there something mechanical in the way it sounded? More footsteps. It had moved on. It was just below her. Susan eased herself quietly away from that side of the shelf. She was fortunate that this very top shelf was empty. She turned her head to the other side. What were her options? What could she do? How close was the next shelf unit?\n
\nA metal hand shot up and then stamped down onto the shelf.\n
\nSusan heard the hand bend the metal shelf. The noise had covered the sound of her throwing herself over towards the next shelf unit. She pulled herself back to the top shelf and held her breath. The footsteps lumbered now. There was no attempt to hide. It would be in this aisle in seconds. Susan grabbed a tin from the shelf beneath her and threw it back into the depths of the store. It struck the wall and fell to the floor where it clattered noisily. \n
\nThe footsteps stopped and then stalked quickly back towards the source of the noise. Susan waited until she was sure this predator was as far away into the store as possible for it to get before dropping to the floor. She ran for the door. She heard heavy footsteps behind her. The door was a few yards ahead. She almost screamed as the door opened and a shaft of light from the corridor cut into the room.\n

\n‘Susan?’ It was Vanessa’s voice.\n
\nSusan ran out of the store room. ‘Shut the door!’ she yelled. ‘Shut the door!’\n
\nVanessa hit the control to close the door, which slid shut. Susan punched a series of buttons on the control pad. ‘That should confuse the door.’\n
\n‘What is it, Susan?’ Vanessa asked. ‘I’ve never seen you so frightened.’\n
\n‘There’s something in there,’ Susan said. ‘Something big and dangerous. It almost killed me.’\n
\nVanessa didn’t doubt the girl. Susan was not prone to exaggeration or hysteria. ‘We need to go and tell your grandfather,’ she said.\n
\nSusan agreed. ‘He’ll know what to do.’\n
\nVanessa looked at the door, very pleased that it was locked. ‘I wonder what it is.’\n
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\nOn the other side of the foot-thick wall, a silver fist withdrew from the door. It had missed catching the young female by inches. It would have to withdraw and ensure there were as few signs as possible that it had ever been present.\n
\n \n
\nGiselle Martens, working with Jim, had plotted the orbit of the new world. They had also begun to work out the repercussions beyond the weather disruptions of the planet’s presence. None of them were good.\n
\nJules Benoit’s voice echoed around the control Room. ‘The clouds are clearing.’\n
\n‘I should hope so,’ Hobson said. ‘The Gravitron’s working overtime.’\n
\n‘No,’ Benoit protested, ‘not on Earth. I mean on the other planet.’\n
\nGiselle reached for the controls to bring the planet into clearer focus but Jim had already beaten her to it.\n
\n‘Sorry,’ he said.\n
\nGiselle’s black hair shimmered as she shook her head. ‘Don’t worry about it.’\n
\n‘He’s right,’ Jim said. ‘There are land masses under those clouds.’\n
\nGiselle leaned forward. ‘Are those oceans?’\n
\nJim frowned. ‘They can’t be. The temperature in interstellar space is far too low for there to be liquid water.’\n
\nGiselle Martens knew that was the truth but as the clouds cleared the planet’s features became more obvious. She could see continents, oceans and even polar ice caps. There was something unsettling about the planet, something unhealthy. A grey fug seemed to hang over everything making the entire world look sickly, as if it were choking on pollution.\n
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\nIn the small laboratory, Dr Who was really rather enjoying himself. He was running tests on blood samples and on the sliver of silver material he had found. He was really never happier than when he was pottering about running experiments. \n
\n‘Hmmm,’ he said thoughtfully. ‘Not quite.’ He turned and scuttled down the few steps into the

main body of the Sickbay where Louise still sat with Tom. ‘How is he?’ the old scientist asked.\n
\n‘Still feverish,’ Louise answered. ‘He opens his eyes but he can’t focus.’\n
\n‘Don’t worry, my dear. He’ll be fine.’ Dr Who patted her arm reassuringly. ‘Now, I need your help to carry a few things from the chemistry laboratory I saw just along the corridor.’\n
\nLouise was reluctant to leave Tom’s side. ‘What about Tom?’\n
\n‘He will be fine,’ Dr Who reassured her. ‘And we will only be a few minutes, I promise you.’\n
\n‘All right,’ Louise gave in. ‘As long as we’re quick.’\n
\n‘We will be.’ Dr Who led her towards the door which slid open and then closed behind them.\n
\nFor a moment the Sickbay was silent except for the occasional bleep of a monitoring machine, but then the panel of the door to the medical store which Commander Hobson had sealed flashed and the door slid open. A silver giant lumbered into the Sickbay. It looked around, taking stock of the men in the beds. It crossed to Tom. As if recognising the danger, Tom’s eyes opened. They were unfocused and feverish. He tried to raise his arms to push this silver devil away but his limbs moved only weakly. The giant lifted one hand. Sparks flew from the hand, striking Tom in the head. He slumped back onto the bed. The giant turned away and lifted one of the other men from his bed. With the man under one arm, the silver giant returned to the store room. \n
\nWhen Dr Who and Louise returned a few minutes later carrying a few jars, they had no idea that anything untoward had happened.\n
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\nGiselle Martens was trying very hard not to panic. She had asked Jim to do some calculations for her. When he had delivered them, she had asked him to try again even though she knew that the answers would be the same. He didn’t make mistakes.\n
\n‘I’m sorry,’ Jim said, ‘there’s no doubts about it. That planet will pull Zeus-1 out of orbit on its next time around. They have to get out of there now.’\n
\nTerry Cutler also heard Jim’s words. His face was on the monitor screen in Martens’ work area. Despite the desperate nature of his own work, Hobson had joined Jim and Martens. \n
\n‘We don’t have enough fuel to push ourselves into a safer orbit,’ Terry answered. ‘I don’t think we even have enough to hold ourselves stable here in this position.’\n
\n‘You don’t,’ Jim said quietly. ‘I’m sorry. There’s no easy way to say that. Your station is going to get pulled out of orbit the next time that planet swings past you – and it’s on its way.’\n
\n‘Abandon ship,’ Hobson said. ‘Nobody ever wants to do that but there’s no choice. You need to get into the escape pods and back to Earth.’\n
\n‘We can’t.’ Terry Cutler’s voice was quiet. ‘It would take too long for the escape pods to be safe in Earth’s gravity well. The new planet would slow us and then pull the pods out of orbit and send them into space.’\n
\n‘The Moon, then,’ Jim suggested desperately. ‘Set your pods to land on the Moon. There are colonies here, as well as us, aren’t there?’\n

\nTerry shook his head. ‘The Moon’s in the wrong place. Or maybe we are. If we fly straight at you we’re flying towards the planet too.’\n
\n‘Then fly away from us,’ Jim said. His face was a mask of concentration. ‘I’m sending you a course and speed. Programme these into your pods and they’ll sling you around the Earth, keeping you well ahead of the planet. You can land on the Moon when you swing round the Earth.’\n
\nThe hope in Terry Cutler’s face died a moment after it was born. ‘Our pods can’t reach that velocity,’ he said. ‘The thrusters just aren’t powerful enough.’\n
\nAnother picture appeared on the screen. It was General Cutler in his polar base. He was trying to look confident but his rigid manner showed the fear he felt for his son. ‘We’ll get a ship up to you, son,’ he said. ‘I’ll send the fastest ship we have to get you all off of that station.’\n
\nFor a long moment nobody spoke. They all knew that simply couldn’t happen.\n
\nIt was Terry Cutler who eventually answered. ‘Belay that, General. You don’t have time to get a ship to us, not even from one of the lunar sites. Anything you launch now will be caught by that planet and thrown out into space. You’ll just be killing people. It would be a suicide mission.’\n
\n‘We can’t just leave you!’ General Cutler roared. ‘There has to be some way to save you.’\n
\nTerry Cutler shook his head. ‘If I had given the order to abandon the station earlier, we might have got back safely. I just didn’t have the information to make that call.’\n
\n‘We’ll find a way,’ General Cutler repeated obstinately. We have to. I have to!’\n
\nThe picture from Zeus-1 flickered and broke up for a moment.\n
\n‘Terry!’ Martens yelled.\n
\nTerry Cutler’s attention was focused on a set of instruments in front of him. ‘It’s pulling at us already.’ The picture broke up again. ‘It’s beginning to pull us out of orbit.’\n
\n‘Use your thrusters!’ General Cutler roared. ‘Fire them at maximum!’\n
\nTerry Cutler shook his head. ‘That would burn them out in minutes.’\n
\nGeneral Cutler’s fists slammed down on his desk. ‘You can’t give up, boy.’\n
\n‘Can you use them to stabilise the station as it’s thrown out of orbit?’ Jim asked.\n
\n‘That’s what I was thinking.’ Terry answered. ‘We need the numbers for our thrust bursts quickly, though.’\n
\n‘Give me a minute.’ Jim was already thinking and punching keys. ‘I’ll send them across.’ He punched the key to transmit the data.\n
\nThe connection with Zeus-1 broke down completely. Terry Cutler’s face disappeared.\n
\nGiselle Martens leaped to her feet. ‘Terry!’\n
\n‘Zeus-1,’ Hobson said, ‘Can you hear us, Zeus-1?’\n
\n‘There’s too much interference from the planet,’ Jim said. ‘They can’t hear us.’\n
\n‘Did they get the information?’ General Cutler’s voice sounded desolate, lifeless. ‘Did it get through to them?’\n
\nJim struggled to meet anyone’s eyes. ‘I don’t know,’ he answered honestly. ‘I just don’t know.’\n

\n‘Then find out,’ the general answered coldly. ‘Find out if my boy has a chance or I swear you don’t.’\n
\n‘That doesn’t help anyone, General,’ Hobson said quietly.\n
\nGeneral Cutler erupted in rage. ‘I only care about helping my son!’\n
\nJim had adjusted the screen so that it showed the relative positions of Earth, the new planet, the Moon and the Zeus-1 space station. The Zeus-1 was being inexorably drawn out of its orbit, attracted by the mass of the new world. It accelerated as it closed on the planet, sweeping by so close that it only just avoided smashing into the rogue world’s atmosphere. The slingshot effect of the planet hurled the station out into interplanetary space.\n
\n‘Terry!’ Cutler yelled. ‘Terry!’\n
\nThere was no answer.\n
\nGiselle Martens slumped forward onto her desk, her face in her hands. Hobson tried awkwardly to comfort her.\n
\nOn the screen, General Cutler had sunk into a chair. His voice was barely a whisper. ‘That was my son,’ he said. ‘That was my son.’\n
\nHobson patted Jim on the shoulder and nodded at Martens. ‘Help me get her to Sickbay, would you?’\n
\nBetween them, Jim and Hobson helped a devastated Martens away from her station and down the steps.\n
\n \n
\nGeneral Cutler sat in the Command Room of Polar Ice Cap Base and stared at the small dot on his screen. The dot was his son going to his death. His only son. The dot disappeared from the screen as it sped out of range. His son was gone.\n
\nHe became aware that the Command Room was utterly silent. The quiet began to crush at him, squeezing his skull until he couldn’t bear it any longer. That planet had taken his son. His only son, the best thing he had ever done in his life. The only thing more precious than his career. That planet had taken Terry from him. It wasn’t going to take anyone else.\n
\nSeated in front of him were the two senior scientists at the base. Barclay was English, untidy and lacking in discipline, but he was a genius. The other was a Swiss woman of around twenty five who kept her long fair hair sensibly tied up. Despite being Swiss-Austrian her name was Evans, the legacy of her mother’s brief second marriage.\n
\nGeneral Cutler rose to his feet. ‘Professor Barclay,’ he said very slowly and deliberately, ‘this base possesses the Z-Bomb, does it not?’\n
\nBarclay visibly blanched. ‘You know it does, General.’\n
\n‘Prepare it for use,’ Cutler ordered.\n
\nBarclay protested. ‘General Cutler, the Z-Bomb can only be deployed by order of the World-Gov Council...’\n
\n‘Or in times of extreme emergency,’ Cutler added. ‘That planet is killing our people. That

makes this an extreme emergency. Get the bomb ready.’ Barclay opened his mouth to argue. Cutler cut him off. ‘Get the bomb ready or I’ll have you shot for mutiny. Get to work.’\n \nCutler stalked off, leaving a silent and shocked Command Room behind him. \n \nBarclay and Evans exchanged a look of utter helplessness.\n

\nCHAPTER FIVE\n
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\nThe Cybermen\n
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\n‘What on Earth has happened to the poor woman?’ Dr Who exclaimed as Jim and Hobson almost carried Dr Martens into the Sickbay.\n
\n‘Zeus-1 is gone,’ Jim explained quietly. ‘The planet’s gravity tore it out of orbit. You know that her and the captain there were, well...’\n
\n‘I understand,’ Dr Who said with enormous sympathy. ‘The pain of losing a loved one is unbearable. Simply unbearable.’ His voice had become hollow. It always did whenever he even hinted at his late wife’s death.\n
\nJim gave his uncle’s shoulder an affectionate pat. ‘I don’t know how anybody can help her just now, but if anyone can, it’ll be you.’\n
\nDr Who moved to a small table and picked up what looked like a sticking plaster. He peeled it and placed it on the back of Giselle Martens’ hand. A few moments later the tension slipped out of her body. Jim and Hobson lifted her onto a bed and placed one of the blankets over her. \n
\n‘That may be the best thing for her,’ Dr Who said. ‘At least in the short term. Now, is there any way we can save the people aboard that station?’\n
\nHobson glanced at Martens, ensuring she was unconscious, before answering. ‘I’m afraid not. They’re out of communications range now. The Doppler Effect means we can’t even talk with them.’\n
\nDr Who drove a frustrated fist into the palm of his other hand. ‘One feels so helpless.’\n
\nThe Sickbay doors burst open again. This time Vanessa and Susan ran in. They were both agitated and stumbled over their words.\n
\n‘There’s something in the store,’ Susan san.\n
\n‘We don’t know what but Susan locked it in there,’ Vanessa added.\n
\nSusan talked over her friend. ‘And that Ralph man disappeared.’\n
\nThat was enough for Hobson to quiet everyone else in the room. ‘What do you mean Ralph’s gone?’ he demanded. ‘He was getting provisions for the kitchen.’\n
\n‘We know,’ Vanessa said irritably. ‘We were there. We took half of the list...’\n
\nSusan took over. ‘And he kept the other half but he disappeared from the store room. He just left the list. We thought he might have been in a mood about a burst bag of sugar.’\n
\n‘But then something chased Susan in there,’ Vanessa added.\n
\nDr Who caught his grand-daughter in a protective hug. ‘Are you hurt, Susie dear?’\n
\n‘No,’ Susan said, forced bravado in her voice. It faltered slightly. ‘I admit I was a bit worried, though.’\n
\n‘Now,’ Dr Who said, gripping Susan’s shoulders. ‘Did you see what this whatever-it-was in the

store room looked like?'\n
\nSusan shook her head. 'It was dark. I didn't see anything.'\n
\n'Then maybe you imagined it,' Hobson suggested. 'The dark does odd things to the mind.'\n
\n'Does it do odd things to shelves as well?' Susan challenged. 'Because something in there punched one of your shelves to bits.'\n
\nHobson sighed deeply and glanced at Louise. 'I owe you an apology,' he said. 'I didn't really believe you had seen anything. I thought you had imagined it.'\n
\n'I wish I had,' Louise admitted.\n
\n'So, what now?' Hobson wondered. 'Those things had two points of entry. Or maybe one. The two stores are actually quite close together.'\n
\nDr Who's voice had changed tone. 'Well,' he said in a very measured, slow tone, 'whatever they are they're safely locked away. I suggest we go back to the Control Room. There is nothing we can do here now.'\n
\n'But you have work to do,' Hobson objected.\n
\n'There is nothing we can do here,' Dr Who repeated. He slowly turned and pointed at the occupied bed furthest from their position. The blanket was pulled up over the figure in the bed. Shadows partly obscured that part of Sickbay but when anyone looked closely they saw that whoever was in that bed was far larger than an average man.\n
\n'Oh, no,' Vanessa whispered.\n
\nHobson's voice sounded dry. 'I see your point, Doctor. Perhaps we should all get back to work.'\n
\n'We shall need Dr Martens and Tom,' Dr Who added, waving his hand to indicate that everyone should move towards the door. They did as he instructed. Jim and Louise slid Tom from his bed while Hobson easily lifted Martens.\n
\nSusan caught her grandfather's arm and pointed at the foot of the bed containing the huge patient. A hint of something silver glinted in the light.\n
\n'I know, Susie,' he said quietly, 'but I think it's best if we just get back to our work now.'\n
\nThe group carefully eased themselves very quietly towards the door.\n
\nThey almost made it.\n
\nJust before they reached the door it was thrown open and a man wearing 19 on his tunic hurried in. 'Commander Hobson, General Cutler's base wants to on the vidlink.'\n
\n'Get out, Mario,' Hobson hissed.\n
\nA twitch on the bed.\n
\n'Everybody get out!' Hobson yelled.\n
\nIt was too late. The blanket was thrown aside and a huge, metallic figure swung off of the bed and aimed a vicious looking gun at them.\n
\n'Stop,' it said in a flat, mechanical voice. It sounded synthesised and had an odd sort of vibrato to as if it came from the mechanical chest unit rather than from the thin slit of a mouth. 'If you

move you will die.’\n
\n‘Back inside, everyone,’ Dr Who said in resignation. As they moved inside and closed the door, the group clumped together. That gave Mario – Number 19 – the chance to duck low and move behind the cover afforded by the nearest bed and its medical unit. Hobson joined the Doctor at the head of the group, leading them as they backed away towards the steps up to the laboratory. The silver giant turned to cover them with its weapon.\n
\n‘Who are you?’ Hobson demanded. ‘What are you? Are you some kind of robot?’\n
\n‘We are nothing so primitive,’ the metallic voice vibrated.\n
\n‘Then what are you?’ Hobson repeated.\n
\nWhile Hobson had kept the silver creature talking, Mario had eased himself from hiding around behind the silver monster. He had eased a large metal pole from one of the beds. Moving remarkably quietly for one so large, Mario swung the metal pole, aiming at the back of the gleaming silver head.\n
\nA weapon whined and pulsed with power. Mario screamed and writhed in the air. His last living act was to desperately clutch at his chest before toppling to the floor, smoke belching from his charred, blackened skin.\n
\nA second metal figure stood in the doorway to the medical store.\n
\n‘You devil,’ Hobson spat. ‘You killed him.’\n
\n‘That is how we will deal with any attack upon us,’ the nearer metal creature answered.\n
\nHobson stared at the store’s open doorway. ‘I thought I’d locked that.’\n
\n‘You did,’ the mechanical voice answered. ‘Your locks are not a match for Cyber-technology.’\n
\n‘Cyber-technology?’ Dr Who asked. ‘Cyber-netics? So you are not machines, then? You are not robots?’\n
\nThe nearest of the giants ignored Dr Who’s question. ‘Who is in command here?’\n
\n‘That would be me,’ Hobson answered warily. ‘At least until a few minutes ago.’\n
\n‘You will do as we tell you,’ the lead creature said in the appalling buzzing voice, ‘or you will become like us.’\n
\nThat made Hobson shiver. ‘All right,’ he said.\n
\nThe leader of the two intruders pressed a control on its chest unit. ‘Operational phase two complete. We are now ready for the next phase.’\n
\n‘Understood,’ a similarly mechanical voice answered. ‘We will now begin operational phase three.’\n
\nThe silver giant in the doorway approached the group of captives. In its hand it held a device that looked like a large metal spider. It looked at Giselle Martens and then at Tom. ‘Neither of these has received Neurotrope Gamma,’ it said in the same buzzing, mechanical voice as its colleague.\n
\n‘So that’s it,’ Dr Who said, nodding. ‘You infected certain members of the crew with a Neurotropic virus. But why only some? And how did you choose your victims?’ His fingers flicked

at his moustache thoughtfully. ‘There was a burst bag of sugar in the store... I suggest that you infected the sugar to infect only as many crewmembers as you required.’\n
\nThe silver monster took a step towards Dr Who. ‘You deduce many things,’ it buzzed. ‘Clever. Clever. Clever.’\n
\nThat was clearly intended as a threat rather than a compliment. The giant lifted the spider-like device towards Tom. Louise pushed herself between the giant and Tom.\n
\n‘Leave him alone he’s hurt. He has a concussion.’\n
\nThe giant processed the information. ‘Concussion. A head injury renders him useless to us at this time.’ It turned to Hobson who was holding up Giselle Martens. ‘What happened to this one?’\n
\nDr Who answered hurriedly. ‘She has been given an anaesthetic which neutralises most brain functions. It will keep her unconscious for many hours.’\n
\nThe giant turned to the bed on which a patient lay, his face covered in black markings. It pulled the blanket away revealing the crewman’s identifying number 9.\n
\n‘Leave Yuri alone,’ Hobson said angrily. ‘Haven’t you done enough to him?’\n
\nThe first giant raised its weapon and aimed it at Hobson. ‘You will be silent.’\n
\nThe giant placed the spider device on Yuri’s head. The central body glowed, the legs unfolded and stretched across Yuri’s head, curling around the skull. Barbs at the end of the legs dug into the skin, pulling the whole apparatus tight to the head. The central body glowed a dull red. Yuri’s eyes opened and he stared lifelessly ahead.\n
\n‘He looks like a zombie,’ Jim said angrily.\n
\nDr Who’s head bobbed in agreement. ‘To all intents and purposes, you are correct, my boy. I imagine the Neurotropic Virus was administered to prepare this man’s neural pathways so that it could interact with that infernal device, placing him under some kind of remote mental control.’\n
\nThe silver giant loomed over Dr Who. ‘You are dangerous. What is your role here?’\n
\n‘Oh, I don’t have one,’ Dr Who said quite calmly. ‘I am here quite by accident.’\n
\n‘That’s true,’ Hobson added, ‘but at least I know how he got into the moonbase. How did you get in here?’\n
\n‘It was simple,’ the giant answered. Even though its voice was emotionless there was a hint of disdain in its words. ‘Only a primitive human brain would not be able to work it out.’\n
\n‘Really?’ Dr Who said mildly. ‘Let me have a try. The Commander mentioned that there have been drops in air pressure. He also mentioned that the two stores are positioned closely together. Let me guess that you tunnelled in under the base, fitting some kind of airlock in your tunnel and... oh, I don’t know, hinged panels in the store rooms so that you could use them as doors to come and go as you saw fit? Am I close?’\n
\nThe silver head fixed its gaze on Dr Who. ‘Dangerous,’ it repeated ominously. ‘Dangerous.’\n
\n‘So he’s right.’ Hobson pulled a deep breath. ‘You won’t win...’\n
\nThe metal giant had lost interest in whatever Hobson might say. It swung back towards the

store room door. The door was pushed open and a third of the silver giants strode through. It carried a kind of computerised control pad and was followed by Dr Parkinson. The black lines were still prominent on his face and one of the spider-like control units was adhered to his skull. He moved with stiff, robotic movements and there was a terrible lifeless lack of animation in his face. \n
\n‘Dr Parkinson?’ Hobson said. ‘Parkinson, it’s me, Hobson.’\n
\n‘He cannot hear you,’ Dr Who said. ‘These creatures are in control of his mind.’\n
\n‘We are Cybermen,’ the first of the silver giants said in its buzzing robotic voice. It strode towards Hobson. ‘You will take us to your Control Room.’\n
\n‘And if I refuse?’ Hobson said defiantly.’\n
\n‘You will be converted to be like us,’ the lead Cyberman said. ‘You will all be converted.’\n
\nDr Who intervened quickly. ‘It would, perhaps, be wisest to do as it asks.’ He put a hand up to stop Hobson from arguing. ‘We can do nothing if they kill us.’\n
\nHobson reluctantly conceded. ‘You’re right.’\n
\n‘You can do nothing,’ the lead Cyberman said to Hobson and Dr Who. ‘Nothing.’\n
\n‘All right,’ Hobson said, ‘I’ll take you to the Control Room.’\n
\nThe lead Cyberman aimed its weapon at Dr Who. ‘You will come with us.’ The gun swung around the others in the room. ‘The rest of you will stay here.’\n
\n‘Will we?’ Jim said angrily. He had no intention of letting these Cybermen take his uncle anywhere.\n
\nThe lead Cyberman gripped the edge of one of the solid metal bunks. Exerting apparently no effort, the Cyberman twisted the metal frame and ripped the sturdy base of the bed from the restraints holding it in place. With one hand it threw the bed across the room where it slammed into the opposite wall, leaving a huge dent from the impact.\n
\n‘Stay here,’ Dr Who said urgently to his family. ‘Just stay in this room and remember all the things I have taught you. Use your intelligence and stay safe.’\n
\n‘All right,’ Jim conceded. ‘We’ll stay.’\n
\n‘Good, good.’ Dr Who pulled a deep breath before spinning on his heel and striding to the leader of the Cybermen. ‘Well, shall we go? I’m intrigued to find out more about you.’\n
\nDr Who gave a cheery wave to his family as he and Hobson were filed out alongside the Cybermen and the two men under their control. As soon as the door closed Jim began moving towards it. Vanessa caught his arm and held him back. \n
\n‘No,’ she said, ‘he told us to stay here.’\n
\n‘But he’s their prisoner,’ Jim objected. He tried to pull away but Vanessa gripped his arm all the tighter. \n
\n‘Your uncle told you to use your intelligence, didn’t he?’ Vanessa went on. ‘Don’t you think he said that for a reason?’\n
\nThe argument was halted by a moan from Tom’s bed. The policeman had opened his eyes.

They were focused but tired and confused.\n
\n‘Tom!’ Louise exclaimed and wrapped him in a hug.\n
\n‘Steady on,’ Tom said. ‘We’re not on our own.’\n
\n‘Are you all right?’ Jim asked.\n
\nTom pushed himself upright and winced at the effort. ‘I’ve got a shocking headache,’ he said, ‘and I’ve been having the strangest dreams about giant robot-men zapping me with electricity.’\n
\nLouise inspected Tom’s forehead. ‘There is a slight mark. That might be what cleared your concussion.’\n
\n‘What?’ Tom looked horrified. ‘You mean those metal things are real?’\n
\nLouise nodded. ‘They called themselves Cybermen.’\n
\n‘We’ve got a lot to tell you,’ Jim said.\n
\n \n
\n‘We can’t let him do it, Barclay.’\n
\nAt Polar Ice Cap Base, Evans had taken advantage of General Cutler’s momentary absence from the Command Room to draw Barclay aside.\n
\nBarclay was agitated and thoroughly terrified. ‘He’s in command.’\n
\n‘He’s not even in command of himself,’ Evans argued in her cultured, elegant tones. ‘He just watched his son be condemned to a quite awful, protracted death and knows he can never say goodbye. He’s bound to be affected by grief.’\n
\n‘I know,’ Barclay argued, ‘but he is still our commander and he has put communication with Headquarters and everywhere else on Security-One-Alpha. He’s the only one who can contact anyone.’\n
\n‘But the destruction that bomb would cause,’ Evans continued, ‘billions would die.’\n
\nBarclay slumped into a seat. ‘There’s nothing we can do.’\n
\n‘Yes, there is,’ Evans said urgently. ‘We’re connected to the feed from the Gravitron base on the Moon. They control the satellites. Our computers talk to theirs. We can get a message through that way.’\n
\nBarclay seemed to shrink even more. ‘If he finds out we did that... he’d have us shot.’\n
\n‘Shot if we try or blown up if we do nothing...’ Evans stared hard at Barclay. ‘It’s your choice.’\n
\nFor the first time in his life, John Richard Barclay chose to take a risk. ‘All right,’ he said. ‘We have to do this quickly.’\n
\n \n
\nDespite the constant strain of their work, Jules Benoit’s face had broken into a broad smile when Caterine Evans’ face had appeared on screen. He had known her for several years. They had even been a couple for a time until his duty had dragged him up to this prestigious posting on the Moon. They had fallen out of touch and the last he had heard she was situated at the Polar Ice Cap Base working on their satellite control project.\n
\n‘Jules,’ Caterine’s voice echoed across the Control Room, ‘this message has to be brief.

General Cutler has lost control because of his grief. He plans to deploy the Z-Bomb against this new planet. We can't stop him but he needs data from your satellites and telescopes. Jules, you have to do something, or we will all die.'\n
\nBenoit stared at the frozen image of Caterine Evans' beautiful face. He had never doubted anything that she had told him. He trusted her completely. \n
\n'Get Hobson back up here,' he said to Nils.\n
\nOn cue, the doors opened and Hobson entered with Dr Who at his side.\n
\n'Everybody, stay calm,' Hobson said. 'Nobody make any stupid moves.'\n
\nJules stared past his commander first at the terrible sight of two of his friends staring dead-eyed as they walked like the living dead, and then at the three silver giants who entered behind Hobson. Each of the giants carried what appeared to be a weapon of some kind and one held a strange mechanical box of some sort.\n
\n'Everybody stay where you are,' Hobson reiterated. 'These things are deadly and they'll kill you without a moment's hesitation so stay calm and don't provoke them.'\n
\nJules remained standing but indicated for the others to sit. 'What's going on, Commander?' he asked. 'What are these things?'\n
\n'They call themselves Cybermen,' Hobson answered. 'That's all we know about them.'\n
\n'Oh, not really,' Dr Who said. 'Would one of you be so kind as to put the image of the new world onto the screen?'\n
\nJules moved quickly, eager to get Caterine Evans' face out of even the sight of these metal monsters. He hit a control and the new planet appeared on screen.\n
\n'Thank you,' Dr Who said with a disarming smile. He might as well have been chatting to friends at a dinner party. 'Now, where was I? Oh, yes. I think we can deduce that our visitors hail from this new world'\n
\n'You said we could expect visitors,' Hobson said, rubbing his chin. 'How did you know?'\n
\nDr Who seemed pleased by the opportunity to show how clever he was. 'Because by then it was clear that the planet was on an unnatural trajectory, which meant that it was being piloted. If intelligent life had piloted a planet here, surely the obvious next step would be for them to make themselves known to us? Whether their intentions were for good or for ill, only time would tell. Alas, I fear they have shown it to be the latter rather than the former.'\n
\n'They killed Mario,' Hobson said. 'Gunned him down with a single shot.'\n
\nJules' hands balled into fists. 'Mario...'\n
\nDr Who put a restraining hand on Jules' arms. 'I'm sorry about your friend, but no good will come of you also getting killed.' He spun on his heel and looked at the Cybermen. 'I would suggest that we also know that these are not robots. Their name is a clue – Cyber-men.' He carefully enunciated the two parts of the name. 'It does rather infer that they are cyborgs – part living, organic creature and part machine.' He leaned towards the Cybermen. 'Well? Am I correct?'\n

\nThe leader of the trio of Cybermen turned to look at him impassively. Eventually it spoke. ‘Millennia ago, our planet, Mondas, shared an orbit with Earth. Our worlds were twins, then we drifted away from you on a journey to the edge of space. Now we have returned.’\n
\n‘And are you really living creatures?’ Hobson asked. ‘I mean, are you organic, like us?’\n
\n‘We were exactly like you once,’ the Cyberman answered, ‘but our scientists realised that our race was growing weak. Our life span was getting shorter, our planet colder. Food could not grow, our people starved. Our scientists and doctors devised spare parts for our bodies until we could be almost completely replaced.’\n
\n‘Quite extraordinary.’ Dr Who was utterly fascinated. ‘May I ask, how much of you was replaced?’\n
\nThe Cyberman replied, ‘Our brains remain similar to yours except that they are protected from their environment. Human weaknesses have been removed.’\n
\nDr Who was even more intrigued. ‘Weaknesses? What weaknesses?’\n
\nThe Cyberman turned, its impassive gaze aimed directly at Dr Who. ‘You call them... emotions.’\n
\n‘That’s horrible.’ Hobson shook his head in disgust. ‘Just horrible.’\n
\nThe Cyberman was unmoved. ‘Your weakness means you are unable to see our strength and our superiority.’\n
\n‘And you will never enjoy the warmth of a summer sun on your face,’ Dr Who argued. ‘You will never use many of the senses you were born with. Taste, touch, smell. They are beyond you. And you will never know the joy of emotions. Happiness, hope, optimism, anticipation, even fear and despair. And most of all you will never know love. Have you absolutely no emotions?’\n
\n‘We do not need emotions,’ the Cyberman answered. \n
\n‘So you wouldn’t care if one of your own kind was in pain?’ Jules demanded.\n
\n‘There would be no need,’ the Cyberman said emotionlessly. ‘We do not feel pain.’\n
\n‘You will,’ Nils said. Jules had seen his friend becoming steadily more agitated as the Cyberman had spoken.\n
\n‘Be quiet,’ Jules hissed. ‘Just shut up, Nils.’\n
\nThe Dane was beyond listening to Jules’ warning. ‘Why? They should know. They should be afraid and they will feel pain.’\n
\nThe Cyberman had moved until it was only a few feet in front of Nils. ‘What do you mean? Explain.’\n
\n‘Your world is dead,’ Nils said. ‘It’s dead.’\n
\nThe Cyberman answered. ‘You are wrong. We learned to control our planet’s flight so that we could return to this orbit, to replenish our population. You will all be like us.’\n
\n‘You won’t have a planet,’ Nils yelled at the Cyberman. \n
\n‘Nils, will you shut up?’ Jules grabbed his friend and shook him hard. ‘Just shut up.’\n
\n‘What did he mean?’ the Cyberman asked.\n

\n‘Nothing,’ Jules answered quickly. ‘It was just anger and fear talking.’\n
\nThe Cyberman paused as if in thought. ‘Do emotions cause humans to speak?’\n
\n‘Sometimes,’ Jules answered.\n
\nThere was something almost malicious in the emotionless reply. ‘Perhaps fear can make this human talk.’ Its hands shot out and caught Nils’ head in a vice-like grip. The Dane screamed in pain. ‘He can feel the pressure on his skull intensifying. He knows that he cannot break free. He knows that my hands can crush his skull.’\n
\n‘Stop,’ Hobson yelled. ‘Just stop! Whatever point you’re making, you’ve done enough.’\n
\nThe Cyberman continued to squeeze. ‘He will tell us what he meant when he said that we will feel pain, and when he said that we will not have a planet.’\n
\nNils fought against the pain. ‘I’ll tell you nothing.’ He screamed as the Cyberman increased pressure. \n
\n‘Tell it,’ Jules said desperately. ‘Nils, just tell it.’\n
\nNils fought to reply. ‘No. I won’t...’ he screamed again.\n
\n‘Just tell it!’ Jules yelled, ‘before it kills you!’\n
\nNils fought against the pain, fought to free himself. Eventually the pain won. ‘There’s a bomb,’ he gasped. ‘There’s a bomb. A Z-Bomb.’\n
\n‘What is a Z-Bomb?’ the Cyberman asked remorselessly. ‘Explain.’\n
\nTears poured down Nils’ cheeks. ‘It’s a bomb. A huge bomb.’\n
\n‘It’s the most powerful nuclear bomb we’ve ever built,’ Jules yelled. ‘It’ll blow your planet apart. It’ll probably destroy the Moon and half of Earth as well!’\n
\n‘Detonating this device would not be logical,’ the Cyberman answered. It was impossible to tell if it believed Jules or not.\n
\n‘Humanity isn’t logical,’ Hobson answered angrily. ‘There’s no sense in being able to blow up our planet a thousand times over but we can do it!’\n
\nThe Cyberman held Nils gripped between its hands for a few seconds longer before releasing him. Nils crumpled to the floor. ‘The bomb must be stopped.’ It turned to one of its subordinates. ‘Inform Mondas of the bomb. Instruct them to prevent its launch.’ The subordinate keyed some instructions into its control pad.\n
\nJules dropped to his knees by Nils. ‘Doctor, his breathing’s not right. Help him.’\n
\nThe lead Cyberman held out a hand, blocking Dr Who’s movement. ‘There is no need.’\n
\n‘He needs help!’ Jules yelled.\n
\nOne of the other Cybermen stepped forward and fired its weapon. Nils convulsed and then was still. Dark smoke smouldered from his broken body and Jules could smell the rank stench of his friend’s charred flesh.\n
\nHobson gripped Jules’ shoulders tightly. ‘Don’t. Just don’t.’\n
\nThe Cyberman observed the interaction between the crewmen. ‘His skull was damaged. He could not be converted. He was of no use to us.’\n

\n‘He was of use to us!’ Hobson said angrily. ‘He was our friend.’\n
\n‘That is irrelevant,’ the Cyberman said. ‘Friendship is irrelevant. You are injured by his death. You are weak.’ That seemed to be the end of that conversation. The Cyberman had made its point. It indicated for the two controlled humans to move forward. The Cyberman holding the control unit manipulated controls, moving the two men towards the Gravitron’s control booth. \n
\n‘Bring your men out of the Gravitron room,’ the Cyberman said.\n
\nHobson pressed the communications button and spoke to the two men inside the control booth. ‘All right. Come out of there, both of you.’\n
\nThe two operators emerged from the Gravitron’s booth and stared in shock at the silver giants and at their expressionless friends. They watched the two controlled men go inside the Gravitron booth and slip on the control caps. Their hands began to move across the controls.\n
\n‘What are you going to have them do?’ Dr Who asked.\n
\n‘We will use the weather to destroy your defences. They will be flooded... frozen. The weather will be our weapon to destroy your ability to protect yourselves. Earth will be ours. You will be ours.’ It stared remorselessly at the room. ‘You will all become like us.’\n

\nCHAPTER SIX\n
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\nThe Battle for the Moonbase\n
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\nIt took only minutes for the power of the Gravitron to begin to wreak havoc upon the Earth. A hurricane that had been held in position out in the middle of the ocean was released and sent towards a chain of islands which were barely above sea level. The winds, peaking at over 240 miles per hour, lashed rain relentlessly into the islands and whipped the waves up to twenty feet when they broke on the shore, overpowering the island's sea defences. The tens of thousands who lived, worked and took holidays on the islands took shelter where they could. Those who had lived there before the Gravitron had come online remembered how badly the islands had been hit in those old days. They had hoped never to see the likes again.\n
\nThe weather turned violent all across the globe. It would soon strike Europe, South America and the coasts of Africa. Projections said that tens of millions would be affected within the first twenty four hours.\n
\nEarth began to panic.\n
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\nPanic had also gripped the crew working in the moonbase's Control Room. They could see the carnage being wrought on Earth. They had also felt an odd sensation as they had swept by inside the orbit of Mondas. It was possible that the extra planet's gravity might cause Moon-quakes. Hobson had turned away from the fallen body of Nils and from the screen. He said he couldn't bear to look.\n
\n'Weak,' the lead Cyberman said. 'Weak.'\n
\nThere had been method in Hobson's apparent moment of weakness. He was leaning against the console by Dr Who. 'This is terrible,' he said to the old man.\n
\nDr Who turned to him, concerned. 'Are you all right?'\n
\nHobson shook his head. No,' he said loudly, 'I'm not.' His voice dropped. 'We have to stop them.'\n
\n'I have been thinking the same,' Dr Who whispered before saying more loudly, 'You must show strength for your crew.'\n
\n'I'll try. Just give me a second.' Again, Hobson's voice dropped. 'There must be something we can do.'\n
\n'I have only one question,' Dr Who whispered. 'Why do they need humans to operate the Gravitron? Why not just do it themselves? Why not built their own gravity device? They're certainly advanced enough.'\n
\n'That's a good question,' Hobson breathed. 'There's nothing inside that booth except...'\n
\n'Gravity waves,' Dr Who said softly. 'For some reason they do not like gravity waves. We have

our first weapon.’\n
\n‘What can we do with it?’ Hobson asked.\n
\n‘That we have yet to find out,’ answered Dr Who. His brow was burrowed, his brain racing furiously. ‘But I think the fact that they use some kind of remote control to order your men’s actions, we might be able to block that signal using your own transmitter, hmmm?’\n
\n‘Now we just need to work out how to deal with these monsters themselves,’ Hobson said quietly.\n
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\nHobson and Dr Who were not the only ones wondering how to deal with the Cybermen. Susan, Jim and Louise were looking through the contents of the medical store and the laboratory. \n
\nWith Tom on the mend, Louise felt confident enough to lead them to the chemical store she and her uncle had visited earlier.\n
\n‘What are those things made of?’ Louise asked, scanning the shelves. ‘The Cybermen, I mean.’\n
\n‘Some kind of metal, I think,’ Jim answered. \n
\nLouise nodded. ‘That must be what uncle found.’ She pushed a jar back onto the shelf.\n
\n‘What were you thinking?’ Jim asked.\n
\n‘There are lots of solvents here,’ Louise said. ‘If they were plastic rather than metal the solvents might have dissolved the plastic.’\n
\n‘They’re not plastic,’ Susan said, ‘but big parts of those chest units are. If they are cyborgs those chest units will replace their internal organs. Melting those would kill the Cybermen.’\n
\n‘Do we need to know which plastic they’re made of?’ Jim asked.\n
\nLouise sucked her lower lip. ‘We should. Not every solvent works on every plastic.’\n
\n‘We could just mix them up into a cocktail,’ Susan suggested. ‘That way we’d get them whatever solvent we had to use.’\n
\nA smile spread across Jim’s face. ‘It might work.’\n
\nThe door behind them opened abruptly. Jim spun around, a bottle of solvent drawn back to throw at a Cyberman.’\n
\nHe relaxed when he saw it was Tom and Vanessa.\n
\n‘What’s keeping you?’ Tom asked. ‘We thought you’d sloped off back to Tardis.’\n
\nJim grinned. ‘Don’t think we didn’t consider it.’\n
\nVanessa squeezed past Tom. ‘Have you found anything useful?’\n
\n‘I think we’ve come up with something,’ Jim nodded. ‘Well, at least Louise and Susan did.’\n
\n‘Louise explained. ‘We just need to mix these solvents up and then find a way to throw it at them.’\n
\nTom looked thoughtfully up at the ceiling. ‘Think we could get it into the sprinkler system? If they have one?’\n

\n‘No, but there is something.’ Jim eased past Tom and headed back out into the corridor. He returned a moment later holding a red canister around a foot and a half long and several inches across with a spray nozzle at the top. ‘Fire extinguishers,’ Jim said with a grin. If we replace whatever gunk is inside these with the solvents we can mix together.’\n
\n‘Are there more of those outside?’ Tom asked.\n
\nLouise nodded. ‘Every five yards or so.’\n
\nTom moved for the door. ‘I’ll go and get one.’\n
\nLouise caught his arm. ‘We will go and get four,’ she corrected him. ‘And if you even try to say this is man’s work I will send you back to bed.’\n
\n‘I wouldn’t dare,’ Tom answered. ‘Come on.’\n
\nWhile Tom and Louise collected more extinguishers, Jim, Vanessa and Susan carried containers of solvent back to the Sickbay’s laboratory. Jim was more adept at mechanics and engineering than chemistry, so he carefully dismantled the first extinguisher and disposed of the contents of what looked like an internal jar. He explained the device to Vanessa. ‘A lot of those fires can’t be put out by water. Electrical fires, fires in spaceships. So they use foam or something else that covers whatever is burning to stop oxygen getting at it.’\n
\n‘Yes,’ Vanessa answered patiently, ‘I’m from the past but not so far in the past that I don’t know how fire works.’\n
\nThere was no malice in her gentle rebuke and Jim couldn’t help grinning. ‘All right. I’ll be less patronising.’ He turned his attention to the small inner jar. ‘This is where the stuff that puts out fires is stored. It’s compressed and under huge pressure so when it comes out it really comes flying out fast.’\n
\n‘And that’s where the solvents are going?’ Vanessa asked.\n
\n‘Yes.’\n
\nTom and Louise hurried back into the Sickbay, clutching more extinguishers in their arms.\n
\n‘We’ve got them,’ Louise said.\n
\n‘Are you making any progress?’ Tom asked.\n
\nJim nodded. ‘Help me dismantle the extinguishers.’\n
\nLouise and Vanessa joined Susan at the work-bench inside the laboratory. She had started to decant the solvents into a large glass basin.’\n
\n‘Will any of these react with each other?’ Louise asked.\n
\nSusan’s hand froze just as she was about to tip another jar of solvent into the mixture. She concentrated for a moment before tipping the solvent into the concoction. ‘Hopefully not,’ she said.\n
\n‘Hopefully?’ Louise choked out.\n
\n‘Should we be worried that this is going to explode?’ Vanessa asked.\n
\n‘No.’ Louise shook her head. ‘We need to be worried about the Cybermen, though.’ She picked up glass stirring rods and passed one each to Vanessa and Susan while retaining one for

herself. ‘Come along, my pretties, let’s get mixing. Hubble-bubble, toil and trouble...’\n
\n‘I’m not making a joke about that,’ Tom muttered to Jim.\n
\n‘Me neither,’ his friend agreed, beginning to dismantle another extinguisher. ‘Not even close to being brave enough to do that.’\n
\n‘Nope,’ Tom said, ‘and I’m not that stupid. Not that stupid at all.’\n
\nThey all hurried about their work.\n
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\n‘Gravitron Base, this is Rinberg. Answer now.’\n
\nRinberg’s voice was now angry. He had been getting ignored for a full five minutes. The Cybermen had instructed Hobson not to respond. He had no choice other than to comply with their instructions.\n
\n‘What will they do if you do not answer?’ the lead Cyberman asked mechanically.\n
\nThe question was clearly directed at Hobson, who tried to remain calm under that terrible, empty gaze of the Cybermen. ‘I don’t know,’ he answered finally.’\n
\n‘You are lying,’ the Cyberleader said tonelessly. ‘You are commander here. You must know what will happen. Kill one of the crew.’\n
\nThe Cyberman without the control box took a step forward and aimed its weapon at Chen Lim. The scientist was terrified but refused to back away. If he was going to die it would be done staring his enemy in the face.\n
\n‘I don’t know!’ Hobson repeated desperately. ‘The base regulations don’t cover this eventuality. Normally a base would be left for a month under quarantine because we reported this infection but they need control of the Gravitron so they might come up. I just don’t know.’ He looked desperately at Chen Lim and the gun aimed at the man’s head. ‘That’s all I know!’ he yelled. ‘Now let him go!’\n
\nThe Cyberleader didn’t move. Sweat beaded on Chen Lim’s forehead, he started to shake but still refused to back down. He stared defiantly into death’s blank, expressionless face.\n
\nThe merest twitch of a hand from its leader instructed the Cyberman to lower its weapon. \n
\nChen Lim buckled and sank into a chair, shaking and sweating. ‘Interesting,’ the Cyberleader buzzed. ‘Interesting.’\n
\nDr Who had made use of the confrontation. While he had immense sympathy for Chen Lim’s predicament there was little he could have done to save the man had the Cybermen chosen to kill him. He could, however, make use of the distraction. He slipped back towards the panel controlling transmissions back to Earth. If he could find the frequency being used by the Cybermen’s control unit he might be able to break their control on the poor puppets inside the Gravitron booth. The controls themselves were childishly simple to understand. He only had to press a few buttons and... the computer started scanning for local transmissions. Almost immediately a light flashed green. A little smile twitched Dr Who’s moustache. With a barely noticeable movement he pressed another control. A second later a whine filled the Control

Room. He watched through the clear wall as the two men inside the Gravitron booth slumped forward over their consoles.\n
\n‘What is happening?’ the Cybermen’s leader demanded.\n
\nIts underling inspected the control box it carried, searching for an explanation. It moved dials, adjusted settings and reset controls before answering. ‘There is interference with our signal. We have lost control over the drones.’\n
\nThe Leader strode towards its subordinate. ‘What is the source of the interference?’\n
\n‘Scanning, Leader,’ it said, adjusting more controls. ‘The source of interference is inside this room.’\n
\nThe Leader spun around, scanning the room. Its head swivelled in sharp, jerky mechanical movements.\n
\nUntil it saw Dr Who standing by a panel.\n
\nIt strode towards the old man, lifting its weapon as it did so. Dr Who swallowed hard. He knew what was coming. He had been caught. Could he talk his way out of this? There had to be a way to outwit these machine-men. They were logical, had no emotions. Could he use that? What of their fear of gravity? If they were logical their minds would likely be literal. There had to be some way he could trick them.\n
\nThe Leader’s weapon rose higher.\n
\nAnd the Leader stopped. \n
\nIt turned away abruptly, looking at the doors to the Control Room. ‘There is someone outside,’ it said in its flat mechanical voice. ‘Destroy them.’\n
\nThe Cyberman nearest the door was the one holding the control pad. It put the control down and strode towards the door. Before it could open the doors they were thrown open from outside and Jim and Tom erupted into the room. They squirted fire extinguishers into the chest unit of the Cyberman. Initially the liquid they squirted had no effect. They had to throw themselves at the Cyberman’s arms to stop it from firing its weapon. It easily threw them both aside but that moment had given Louise, Vanessa and Susan time to spray their own extinguishers into the chest unit. \n
\nThe Cyberman slowed, its movements becoming jerky. ‘I... can... cannot...’ Its leg gave way and it dropped to one knee, dropping its weapon as it fell.\n
\nJim and Tom were already spraying their solvents into the chest of the second Cyberman. It fired its weapon, barely missing Tom and blowing the computer terminal behind him to pieces.\n
\nThe Leader’s weapon was aimed at Susan. Dr Who threw himself at the metal giant. It was incredibly strong, as powerful as ten men. Suddenly Hobson was on the Leader too.\n
\n‘Get them!’ Hobson yelled. ‘Hold them down!’\n
\nBoth Hobson and Dr Who were thrown aside but Jules Benoit and three others took their place and Susan, Vanessa and Louis sprayed the solvent into the Leader’s chest unit. The Cyberman under attack from Tom and Jim was also being pulled to the ground. They sprayed the solvent

into the chest unit.\n
\nTerrible electronic gasps came from the Cybermen, like the death rattle of the aged. Their arms flailed out of control and their legs kicked but they were weak. Parts of their chest units had liquefied. An oily white fluid oozed and poured from their chest units, spreading like blood from a fatal gunshot wound. Hobson ripped the Leader's gun from its grasp and fired into the vile creature's chest twice, three times.\n
\nThe twitching stopped.\n
\nChen Lim followed his commander's lead and fired into the chest and then head of the first Cyberman to have been attacked. Sparks flew from the chest unit along with the white oily ooze. A third shot to the head caused the metal helmet to explode. The remains of a human skull and brain were exposed.\n
\nJules finished the third Cyberman, again completing the task with its own weapon.\n
\nHobson sucked a deep breath and saw the three young women helping Dr Who to his feet. 'What the devil was in those extinguishers?' he asked.\n
\nLouise answered, 'A mixture of solvents. It more or less dissolved whatever they had in place of internal organs.'\n
\n'We called it Susie Cocktail,' Vanessa added. 'She mixed it.'\n
\n'Everybody helped,' Susan added modestly.\n
\nDr Who patted her shoulder vigorously in a show of pride. 'I knew that if you used your brains you would find a way.'\n
\n'Brains!' The word triggered Hobson's thoughts to the men with controlled minds in the Gravitron booth. He pointed at the booth. 'Get them out of there,' he shouted, 'and get our boys back in there to control the weather before half of Earth is destroyed.'\n
\n'We must also seal their entrance to the moonbase,' Dr Who said urgently. 'I have no doubts that they will now know that we have killed three of their number.'\n
\n'You're right,' Hobson agreed. He called to Benoit. 'Jules, how much of the plastic concrete do we have?'\n
\n'Gallons,' Benoit answered. 'Why?'\n
\nDr Who beat Hobson to the reply. 'You need to fill a very large mouse hole before the next rat enters.'\n
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\nThe plastic cement was stored in drums the size of a beer-keg. Jim and Tom had volunteered to help Jules Benoit and Chen Lim seal the Cybermen's entrance. It took only a minute to find the entrance in the medical store. The wall containing the medical fridge swung outwards. Beyond it was a small area of dead space between the walls of the medical store and the general food store. One of the wall panels into that room had also been hinged to act as a door. The floor of the dead space had been torn and ripped upwards in an act of brutish strength. A murky hole below stretched away into inky blackness.\n

\n‘Liberty Hall,’ Tom said angrily. ‘They could come and go as they pleased.’ \n
\nChen Lim had passed the first drum of plastic concrete through to Jules and was reaching for the second when they felt a sudden gust of wind as air was drawn to the hole.\n
\n‘They’re coming,’ Jim said.\n
\nTom grabbed the nozzle of the barrel Jules Benoit held. A thick mustard yellow liquid shot from the nozzle into the darkness. Jules turned a dial to full and Tom had to struggle to keep the nozzle aimed into the dark hole. \n
\n‘It needs to be full power,’ Jules explained loudly. ‘This stuff expands a lot but it sets quickly. It needs to be full power to fill the full tunnel right out to the end.’\n
\n‘Give me the other one,’ Jim said urgently. He took the second barrel’s nozzle from Chen Lim and aimed it into the darkness below. ‘Turn it on.’ He struggled to keep the nozzle’s aim true but like Tom he was young and strong. He could hear the Cybermen moving inside the rough tunnel now. The sprayed compound was slowing them but they were getting closer. ‘They’re almost here.’\n
\n‘I see them,’ Tom answered. He dropped to a knee to get a better angle and fired the compound into the leading Cyberman’s face. It tried desperately to wipe the compound away but it was expanding and no matter how hard the Cyberman tried, the compound just seemed to keep expanding.\n
\nThe second Cyberman pushed past its stricken comrade. The plastic concrete continued to expand up past its waist. The Cyberman fought its way through as if walking through treacle. It was almost able to reach them. Its head was just under the mouth of their tunnel. It struggled to raise its weapon. Jim threw himself forward, ramming the nozzle he held into the Cyberman’s brutal slash of a mouth. The Cyberman thrashed and flailed but it was no use. The plastic concrete swelled up around it, holding it in a fatal grasp. Jim pulled the nozzle away and watched as the expanding compound poured from the Cyberman’s mouth and burst its blank metal eyes outwards. The slightest hint of a human skull showed inside the shattered mask.\n
\nThey all withdrew, pulling back into the medical store. The plastic concrete expanded until an uneven mustard dome was left where the mouth to the Cyberman’s tunnel had once been. The tips of one silver hand protruded from the plastic. The rest of the Cybermen who had entered the tunnel were trapped there forever.\n
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\nCommander Hobson’s first priority had been to get the Gravitron back to its regular duties in bringing Earth’s weather under control. He wanted to be back online before talking with Rinberg. He knew that was going to be an unpleasant conversation.\n
\nAs it turned out he was correct.\n
\n‘Cybermen?’ Rinberg said, his voice dripping sarcasm. ‘What on Earth are you talking about, man? Has the pressure of the job got to you?’\n
\n‘See for yourself,’ Hobson answered angrily. ‘We only just managed to kill these three, and

we’ve lost good men to them. Nils included.’\n
\n‘Send me a report,’ Rinberg’s voice came back. ‘I’ll have an investigation team sent up to you.’\n
\n‘Forget an investigator,’ Hobson roared, ‘we need troops, and so do you. These Cybermen plan to turn everyone on Earth into machine-creatures like themselves.’\n
\nHobson waited for Rinberg’s reply. \n
\nNothing came.\n
\n‘Rinberg?’ he said, increasingly irritated. ‘Rinberg?’\n
\n‘He won’t answer,’ Dr Who’s voice came from up on Giselle Martens’ work platform.\n
\n‘Why the devil not?’ Hobson answered.\n
\nDr Who ushered him up the steps to join himself, Susan, Louise and Vanessa. ‘See for yourself.’\n
\nHobson hurried up the steps. ‘What is it?’ he asked.\n
\nDr Who handed him a small, ancient telescope. It seemed that Martens liked antiques and had several around her workspace. Dr Who extended a bony finger out towards the lunar surface. ‘There.’\n
\nHobson put the telescope to his eye and peered through the dome out onto the wide grey plain beyond. A complex communications array lay smashed to pieces. Beside it, ripping the signal dish in half, were two Cybermen.\n
\nHobson felt a terrible chill come over him. \n
\n‘They’ve cut us off,’ Dr Who said. ‘We’re on our own.’\n

\nCHAPTER SEVEN\n
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\nRace Against the Cybermen\n
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\nWhen Jim and Tom returned to the Control Room with Jules Benoit they had Giselle Martens with them. Her anaesthetic patch had fallen off at some point and she was conscious. The shock of the loss of Terry had passed. Now she was simply coping with the miserable reality of the fact that he was gone. Work was the best distraction she could think of and she returned to her station, having been brought up to date on the way back to the Control Room.\n
\n‘Dr Martens?’ Hobson asked. ‘Giselle?’\n
\n‘I’m fine,’ she answered brusquely. She felt ashamed that she had been so sharp. He was only showing concern for her. ‘Honestly,’ she said more evenly, ‘I’m all right.’ She stared in bemusement at the remains of the three Cybermen. ‘Besides, I think you can probably use every pair of hands you can get.’\n
\n‘That’s true,’ Hobson answered. ‘We’re in trouble.’\n
\n‘They have destroyed the moonbase’s radio transmitter,’ Dr Who explained, ‘before Mr Hobson had the chance to fully warn Earth of the Cybermen’s existence or that there is a spaceship on its way to the Polar Base to stop this terrible Z-Bomb of yours.’\n
\n‘What?’ Giselle asked. Had everything gone completely mad in the last few hours? ‘The planet’s Mondas and its inhabitants are Cybermen?’\n
\nDr Who nodded. ‘That’s right.’\n
\n‘So who is using the Z-Bomb?’ Giselle asked. Anybody who wanted to use that would have to be insane.’\n
\n‘Or maddened by grief,’ Dr Who said gently.\n
\nGiselle understood his meaning. ‘General Cutler?’ She sighed. ‘I understand why he’s so broken, but to deploy the Z-Bomb?’ She shook her head in sympathy and then a frown appeared on her face. ‘How do we know about the bomb?’\n
\nHobson hiked a thumb at Benoit. ‘For once we get to thank Jules’ love-life for that.’\n
\nOh, yes, Caterine Evans was at Polar Cap Base, wasn’t she? ‘Is there any way we can get a message to Earth?’ she asked.\n
\nHobson shook his head. ‘The only transmitter we have is in the rover, and that doesn’t have the range to reach Earth. It can’t even reach the other settlements on the Moon until it’s in line of sight of them.’\n
\n‘The Cybermen would probably get to it before it got far anyway,’ Jules said.\n
\nHobson agreed. ‘It’s quick enough but I think they’re quicker.’\n
\n‘There is one way to get a message to Earth,’ Dr Who said, ‘but it is terribly dangerous.’\n
\n‘But is there a chance?’ Hobson demanded.\n

\nBoth Tom and Jim were looking at the old man. \n
\n‘Do you have something in Tardis?’ Tom asked.\n
\n‘He means Tardis,’ Jim said. ‘Don’t you?’\n
\nDr Who agreed, but looked frustrated. ‘But I do not know how I can get to Tardis.’\n
\n‘What is Tardis?’ Giselle asked.\n
\n‘Our sort of spaceship thing,’ Tom answered.\n
\n‘Sort of spaceship thing?’ Dr Who echoed askance. ‘I thought you had a higher regard for my ship than that.’\n
\n‘I do,’ Tom said quickly. ‘I’m just the only one who doesn’t understand it. Well, me and Ian.’\n
\nDr Who patted Tom’s arm. ‘But you do have many great qualities, my boy.’ He sighed again. ‘But I simply cannot reach Tardis before I would be caught by the Cybermen.’ He glanced at Jim. ‘Do you think you could pilot Tardis to the Polar base?’\n
\nJim thought for a moment. ‘Maybe. I’ve not had as much practice as you and Susan, though.’\n
\n‘I’ll do it,’ Susan’s voice came from behind them. ‘It makes sense. I’m the best at piloting the ship apart from you.’\n
\n‘But it will be so very dangerous getting there,’ Dr Who said, clutching her shoulders in concern.\n
\n‘I’ll be fine,’ she said uncertainly.\n
\n‘If we can use that rover-thing of yours we might stand a chance,’ Tom said.\n
\n‘I already said they would catch it,’ Hobson said irritably.\n
\nTom nodded enthusiastically. ‘I hope so.’\n
\n \n
\nThe rover was the moonbase’s main transport vehicle. It had been on the Moon since the first days of the moonbase’s construction. It had been used by the engineers and scientists during those long months of work. Now almost ten years old it was primarily used when repairs and general upkeep was required on the lunar shuttle’s landing pad or to ferry passengers and cargo from the shuttle. In the intervening years the shuttles had grown larger but the promised replacement for the rover had never arrived. The size of an old van back on Earth, the rover was simply too small to carry all of the arrivals to the Moon when the new shuttle landed and had to make repeat journeys. It was also slow, capable of no more than 12 miles per hour, which made trips to nearby colonies long and dull excursions.\n
\nDespite all of these failings, the rover had one thing very much on its side. It was immensely reliable.\n
\nThe huge doors of the rover’s bay opened and the vehicle trundled out onto the lunar surface, its huge, chunky wheels crunching across the abrasive, grey regolith. The giant doors closed and locked in place behind the rover as it moved across the broad plain, following its assigned course. The vehicle was soon up to its top speed and made a hundred yards before the first Cyberman emerged from hiding in the shadows behind a huge boulder. More quickly appeared,

showing the real extent of the Cybermen's presence on the lunar surface.\n
\nEight of them approached the rover, moving with a terrifying speed in the low gravity. They grabbed the sides and back of the rover and pulled themselves aboard. One leaped with alarming precision from a boulder onto the top of the rover. They swarmed over the vehicle like silver insects devouring their prey. Silver fists pummelled the roof and windows and sides. The rover was designed to withstand a heavy impact but not this kind of onslaught. One of the Cybermen punched through the top of the rover and began to peel the roof away. Another ripped the door from its hinges and threw it away. The rover was lost.\n
\n \n
\nInside the moonbase, on the astronomy platform, Vanessa and Louise had telescopes, as did Giselle Martens. They were watching the Cybermen attack the little vehicle.\n
\n'They're inside the rover,' Louise called.\n
\nDown below in the Control Room, Dr Who nodded at Hobson, who spoke into a microphone. 'Open the hatch. They've taken the rover. When they see it's empty they'll know it's a diversion. Go.'\n
\n'And hurry,' Dr Who added urgently. 'Go as quickly as you can and please be safe.'\n
\n \n
\nOn the far side of the moonbase a small door opened and four space-suited figures emerged onto the dusty grey plain. Three of them were tall and of similar heights and builds. The fourth was smaller.\n
\n'We're outside,' Susan said. \n
\n'The hatch is closed behind us,' Jules added, reporting to Hobson. We're on our way.'\n
\nThe four moved across the ground quickly, taking long, loping strides which carried them three or four yards at a time. The men moved faster than Susan. She was smaller and less powerful than them and had to work harder to keep up. They slowed their pace so that she didn't become detached from their party. Conversation was kept to a minimum. They didn't want to alert the Cybermen if they were monitoring radio frequencies. As they had been ordered, all four resisted the urge to leap too high, again fearing that they might alert the Cybermen to their presence outside of the moonbase. \n
\nJules Benoit, following Jim's directions, was first to reach the plain where Dr Who's party had landed. He was startled by the distant sight of a blue crate of some kind. 'What on Earth is that?' he asked.\n
\n'Our way off this rock,' Jim answered, passing Jules and taking a long stride towards the reassuring shape of Tardis.\n
\n'But it's a box,' Jules complained. 'Just a box.'\n
\nTom's chuckle echoed inside of his helmet. 'You're in for a real surprise, mate.' He loped after Jim.\n
\nSusan nudged Jules' arm. 'Come on. It's more impressive than it looks.' She bounded off after

Tom and Jim.\n
\n‘They’re mad,’ Jules breathed. ‘It’s a crate.’\n
\nA voice crackled in Jules’ ear. It was Hobson. ‘Pick up the pace, Jules. They’ve spotted you. They’re on your tail.’\n
\n‘Can we get back to the moonbase?’ Jules demanded.\n
\n‘No time,’ Hobson answered. ‘They’d cut you off before you got close.’\n
\n‘You will be safe inside Tardis,’ Dr Who’s voice cut into Hobson’s channel. ‘Now hurry.’\n
\n‘But it’s just a...’ Jules glanced back. He saw glittering silver flashes closing. The Cybermen were directly between his party and the moonbase. There was no option now. He turned and with the experience of countless excursions onto the Moon’s surface behind him began taking long, bounding steps after his companions. He ate up the ground, moving with long, low strides which saw him ease past Susan and then both Tom and Jim as they closed on the crate. As he moved nearer to their objective he saw that it was actually some kind of shed. It was made of neatly ordered panels and had writing close to the top. What did it say? Another step took his close enough to read it. POLICE BOX. Police? What in the world was a Police Box? Two more bounds and he was there. The nearest side had some sort of opening for a key. One of his companions would have that. He turned to see how far behind they were. It was a terrible sight. Tom and Jim were only a few steps behind him but Susan had dropped behind them and the Cybermen were closing on her. One had pulled ahead of the others and was only ten yards behind her.\n
\n‘Susan!’ he yelled.\n
\nJim and Tom both came to scrambling, untidy stops and turned. When they saw Susan’s peril they turned back and bounded towards her.\n
\n‘Keep coming!’ Tom yelled.\n
\nThe Cyberman was within five yards when they reached Susan. Tom again stopped but Jim kept going. He had pulled a canister from his pocket and as he closed on the Cyberman he hurled it with all of his might. \n
\nThe canister of Susie Cocktail erupted on impact against the Cyberman’s chest unit. They were in direct sunlight which kept the liquid warm enough not to freeze. It worked its way into the chest unit before it could evaporate. Jim stopped. The other Cybermen were close behind. He needed to move fast. He took two steps and saw the dying Cybermen ahead drop to its knees. He pushed off hard and as he passed over the Cyberman’s head, he kicked hard with the other foot, sending himself higher and further than he had leaped before. He was in the air for an eternity. He saw Tardis ahead. Tom and Susan had reached it. She was fumbling in her spacesuit’s pocket for the key. He didn’t look back. He didn’t dare. He knew the Cybermen were close. Just keep moving. His foot hit the ground and he stumbled a little but he kept moving, pushing off again. Susan had found the key. She had to have a steady hand. A bright light said she had opened the door. Tom pushed Susan and then Jules inside. Tom turned and looked

back. His eyes went wide with fear. Jim knew why. The Cybermen had to be almost on him. Somehow they moved fast in this environment. He had to stay low. \n
\nNearly there.\n
\nNearly.\n
\nAnother step. \n
\nHe weakened and looked back.\n
\nA Cyberman was just feet behind him, that impassive mask of a face staring into him. Staring through him.\n
\nTom was in the doorway, encouraging him on, silently mouthing ‘Come on! Come on!’\n
\nThe shadows showed Tom how close the Cyberman was. It would be touch and go. He had to be precise. He had to be absolutely spot on or he was dead.\n
\nOne more step. Tardis shone ahead. He saw Tom waving him on. He saw Benoit looking dazed and bemused in the impossible space inside that silly looking box. He saw Susan at the controls.\n
\nHe took that final step, pushing himself on, low and fast.\n
\nSuddenly he wasn’t flying through the air. He landed hard, slamming into the floor. The Cyberman had him!\n
\nNo, wait a minute. Floor?\n
\nHe turned quickly and saw that he was on the floor inside Tardis. That leading Cyberman was only feet from the door and moving fast. \n
\nTom slammed the door and Susan operated a control.\n
\nThere was a violent THUD from the door as the Cyberman slammed into it.\n
\n‘Just in time,’ Tom said, easing his helmet off. He helped Jim to stand. ‘You all right?’\n
\n‘Just about,’ Jim answered. ‘I forgot Tardis has normal Earth gravity.’\n
\n‘You remember now, don’t you?’ Tom chuckled.\n
\n‘The bruises will remind me,’ Jim said with a wince. He removed his helmet and put it on a work bench. A series of thuds came from the door.\n
\n‘Don’t worry,’ Susan said, ‘I magnetised it. We’re safe in here.’\n
\nJim joined her. ‘Co-ordinates set for the Polar Base?’\n
\nSusan nodded. ‘Yes. Of course. I did it while you were lazing on the floor.’\n
\nJim smiled at her. ‘Do the honours then.’ She pushed the control yoke and with its usual whooshing sound, Tardis began the dematerialisation process.\n
\nTom joined Jim and Susan before turning to smile at Benoit, who was looking around in silent shock. ‘You’ve got lots of questions.’\n
\nBenoit nodded.\n
\nJim smiled sympathetically. ‘Take your helmet off and we’ll give you some answers.\n
\n \n
\nThe blue box made no sense to the Cyberman who had almost caught Jim. It had seen inside

the box. There seemed to be a vast area inside. That was illogical. It could work out the dimensions of the box's exterior and from that it knew the area inside. That meant it had to be an illusion or a projection. It was a trick of some kind. When it tried to smash the door in it had no success. The door was made of wood and glass. It should have shattered and splintered. Instead it was like striking titanium. Increasing resolution the Cyberman could see the grain of the wood but it could make no impression on the door.\n
\nAnd then the light on top of the box began to flash regularly. In absolute silence, the box faded away, leaving the Cyberman alone. When the other Cybermen arrived there was nothing left of the box except fox a square imprint in the grey soil. The box had completely vanished.\n
\n \n
\nHobson drew the telescope away from his eye. He stared out at the distant Cybermen in shock. He knew that Giselle Martens' stunned expression was matched by the one on his own face.\n
\n'It just faded away.'\n
\n'Fascinating, isn't it?' Dr Who said cheerfully. 'It's the first time I've seen it happen from the outside. What an interesting experience.'\n
\n'But it's impossible,' Martens said. 'Things don't just disappear?'\n
\nDr Who smiled benignly. 'And how often do rogue planets and robot men visit Earth?' he asked. 'A few days ago you would have called them impossible, too.'\n
\nFor the first time since she had returned to the Control Room something akin to a smile appeared on Martens' face. 'You might be right.'\n
\n'What now?' asked Vanessa. Both she and Louise had been unbearably tense watching the small party making its escape towards Tardis. 'The Cybermen aren't finished with us, are they?'\n
\n'They'll try again,' Louise said, 'and they'll probably try harder now they've been surprised by the level of our technology.'\n
\n'I agree,' said Dr who. 'We must prepare for in earnest for the next attack of the Cybermen.'\n

\nCHAPTER EIGHT\n
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\nThe Attack from the Snow\n
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\n‘Who sent a signal?’\n
\nThe atmosphere in the Command Room of Polar Ice Cap Base was as icy as the weather outside. General Cutler had been enraged by the lack of a response from the Gravitron base on the Moon. He had hailed them repeatedly. When no answer had been forthcoming he had demanded that a full check on their communications systems. When that had found no fault he had grown suspicious. Were the crew on the moonbase ignoring him deliberately? Why would they do that? Why would they ignore him? He was a general. Nobody up there has the guts to defy someone of his rank without reason? So why would they ignore him? They had to disapprove of something he was doing.\n
\nSomehow they knew about the Z-Bomb.\n
\nSomebody had told them about the Z-Bomb.\n
\nHe knew that all communications had been shut down. He had done that himself. He didn’t want politicians in Geneva interfering, demanding debates, votes, resolutions and amendments. This wasn’t a decision for politicians to make. They were weak, self-serving. This was for the military. Only a soldier understood what needed to be done. \n
\nThat new planet had to be destroyed.\n
\nHe had sent a Military Ops computer programme to ferret through all of the potential transmissions to the moonbase and it had found one in the regular mundane back and forth chatter that computer protocols had with each other when they were in a network. The message itself had been shredded after being transmitted and it had been sent from an easily accessible terminal. That meant he had a traitor on his staff at the polar base and that it was someone intelligent and resourceful. He couldn’t conceive of anyone in a military uniform disobeying an order to go to war. Nobody with even a hint of cowardice would be sent to a prestigious posting like this. Scientists, on the other hand? They were civilians. They were weak, the same as politicians. They didn’t understand the difficult decisions either. They talked about the morality of their work while the enemy killed his men. He had seen that happen too often before. No, this was a military decision and as the ranking military officer it was his decision. They might claim later that he was acting unreasonably out of grief. That wouldn’t matter. He would have done his duty.\n
\nThe question was, which of the scientists was responsible? Who was guilty? Who could he trust? The last question was easy. He trusted none of them. None. Not one. Barclay was a coward, Evans was a possibility, having the link to the moonbase, but those were the only two he actually knew. There were a dozen others who were too far down the chain for him to actually

meet. It could be any of them. He had placed a little spy program in the system to monitor everyone on the science team. If any one of them stepped out of line again, he would have them. He would like to have thrown them all in the brig and been done with it but with the link to the moonbase down he needed them if he was going to calculate the trajectory, speed and every other aspect of the launch of the Z-Bomb. So, he would watch them. Yes, he would watch them closely.\n
\n \n
\nAround thirty feet above General Cutler's head and the layers of concrete, thermally reflective cladding material inside the base and the packed ice above it, the temperature was brutally cold. Meteorologists would say that the temperature was -23 degrees Celsius. The wind chill caused by the howling gales blowing in the worst blizzard they had seen in a decade made -35 degrees closer to the truth. \n
\nThree large figures moved through the storm, barely slowed by the fury of the inclement weather. They moved in an unhurried but stiff manner towards the dome which was the only sign of life above the ice. The hatch slid open giving them entrance to the stairs beyond, which wound down into the Polar Ice Cap Base.\n
\n \n
\nBuddy and Mac sat in a dull concrete room, working their way through the most boring sentry duty known to the army. They were at a secret base at the South Pole. Nobody knew it was there and even if they did know, how would they get to the base with the coldest temperature anybody could remember and a crazy blizzard blowing outside? They had agreed it was the dumbest duty in the world.\n
\nUntil a light flashed and an alarm started to PING annoyingly in their ears.\n
\n'What's that?' Buddy asked.\n
\nMac stared at his display. 'The outer door on the surface was opened.' He frowned. 'Do we have anybody outside?'\n
\n'In this?' Buddy shook his head. 'Nobody's that crazy. Not even here. Maybe it's the penguins looking for some shelter?'\n
\nThat was a standing joke at the base, even though there were no penguins for hundreds of miles.\n
\nSomething solid slammed against the solid reinforced steel door leading to the stairs up to the surface.\n
\n'That's no penguin,' Mac said. He reached for his rifle but before he could grab it a blast took the door off its hinges. Buddy and Mac were both thrown to the floor by the shockwave from the explosion. Mac managed to stagger to his feet but the pulsing whine of a weapon threw him backwards with acrid smoke seeping from inside his uniform and the stench of charred flesh filling the air. Buddy didn't even have the chance to stand. He was blasted to oblivion where he lay.\n

\nThe Cybermen entered the room. With no other threat visible they opened the other door and moved into the base.\n
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\nOn the surface above the base, a sturdy, reliable blue shape appeared, its usual materialisation sound swept away by the gale. A door opened and four figures emerged, staggering under the sudden onslaught.\n
\n‘This is horrible,’ Tom yelled, struggling deeper into his thermal coat.\n
\n‘Is this the right place?’ Jim had to shout to be heard.\n
\nJules Benoit nodded inside his coat’s hood and pointed at the dome ahead. ‘There.’\n
\nThey lurched through the snow to the dome and heaved the door open, pulling it closed again after they were inside.\n
\n‘It shouldn’t be like that,’ Jules said. ‘It should need a pass code or for us to be recognised and allowed in.’\n
\nThe cold bit them all a little harder.\n
\n‘That means there’s trouble here already,’ Tom said.\n
\nJim nodded. ‘It’d be too much of a coincidence for it to be anything but the Cybermen,’ said Jim, chewing at his lip.\n
\nTom opened his coat and pulled out one of the Cyberman guns they had captured on the Moon. ‘Who gets this?’\n
\nJim bobbed his head towards Jules. ‘Give it to Jules. He’s probably had more experience with guns than us.’ He pulled two of the extinguishers filled with the solvent solution from inside his own jacket. ‘We’ve got our old favourites here.’\n
\n‘And what about me?’ Susan asked. ‘If you think I’m just going to stand and watch you...’\n
\n‘You’re right, you’re not,’ Jim said.\n
\nTom agreed. ‘You’re going to find a safe place till we’re sure this place is all right.’\n
\nSusan rose into a fine teenage fury. ‘I’m not a child,’ she protested. ‘I’m the one who got us here, remember.’\n
\n‘And we need you to get us back,’ Tom argued, ‘so please – somewhere safe. Or I’ll arrest you. I am still a copper, remember?’\n
\nJules had looked inside several doors before pointing to one. ‘In here,’ he said. ‘She should be safe in here.’\n
\nWith a volcanic scowl, Susan went past Jules into the bunkroom. \n
\n‘All right,’ Jim said quietly, ‘where would they go to? The Cybermen.’\n
\n‘The Command Room, I suppose,’ Benoit answered.\n
\n‘Which way?’ asked Tom.\n
\nBenoit pointed ahead. ‘This way.’\n
\n‘All right,’ Tom agreed. ‘You have the gun, you lead the way.’\n
\n \n

\n‘You want us to plot the course through to the planet?’ Evans asked.\n
\nGeneral Cutler fixed a glare on Barclay. ‘Yes, that’s exactly what I want you to do, Mr Barclay.’\n
\n‘It’s impossible,’ Caterine Evans protested. ‘The complexity of the calculations is extraordinary.’\n
\n‘So are the computers here,’ Cutler snarled. He saw three or four other members of the scientific team shaking their heads slightly or making disapproving faces about his plan. He had been right. The scientists were weak. Well, that didn’t matter. He had turned weak boys into good soldiers before.\n
\nEven Terry.\n
\nNo, Terry had been a good soldier. He had been a great soldier.\n
\nExcept he hadn’t wanted to be a soldier at all. He had wanted to be an engineer.\n
\nBut the Cutlers were soldiers not engineers. They were always soldiers. So, yes, he had forced Terry into uniform but it had worked for him. He had been a captain. He would have been a general.\n
\nWould have been.\n
\nHe wouldn’t be anything now. He was dead. Or he would be dead. Because his father had forced him into uniform rather than letting him do what he loved.\n
\nIt was his fault Terry was dead. His fault. He was responsible. An officer always had to take responsibility.\n
\nEven for the death of his own son.\n
\nBut he would make sure that planet didn’t take anyone else’s son. There might be fall-out from the Z-Bomb but better to lose a few than to lose everybody, and it would end that damned planet. That world that had been as responsible as he had. If he could destroy it he would get some kind of revenge... of redemption for what happened to his son.\n
\nYes, he was going to destroy that damned planet.\n
\n‘You can do it,’ he said roughly to the scientists. ‘You’ve got the brains, you’ve got the computers.’ His voice rose to a roar. ‘You can do it and you will do. Now get on with it!’\n
\nNobody moved.\n
\nDamn them all. This was mutiny.\n
\n‘You’ll do it or I’ll shoot you myself!’\n
\nStill nobody moved.\n
\n‘Do you hear me?’\n
\nIt was Caterine Evans who answered. She sounded shaken. ‘They hear you, General, but I don’t think you’re in charge anymore. None of us are.’\n
\n‘What?’ Was the woman mad? Of course he was in command. It took General Cutler a few moments to realise that no-one in the room was looking at him. They were looking past him towards the small set of steps leading down from the door. He spun around and saw three huge

silver figures standing on the steps, dangerous-looking weapons of a kind he had never seen before aimed at the staff in the weapon. They all stood still for a moment, humans and aliens alike until a soldier made a move, unslinging his weapon.\n
\n‘No!’ Cutler shouted. ‘Don’t...’\n
\nThe soldier was fast, but the metal creature was faster. It fired before the soldier could aim. Cutler watched another man in his charge die, collapsing to the floor with smoke belching from his body.\n
\n‘Nobody make a move,’ General Cutler said. ‘Nobody do anything without my order.’\n
\nOne of the metal giants descended the stairs and came to stand in front of the General. Cutler stood over six feet three inches in height. This giant towered over him by almost a foot.\n
\n‘You are in command,’ it said in a metallic, buzzing voice.\n
\nCutler didn’t know if that was a question or a statement. ‘That’s right,’ he replied. ‘General Cutler. I take it you’re from that new planet.’\n
\n‘Mondas,’ the silver giant answered. ‘Our planet is Mondas. Now Earth also belongs to the Cybermen.’\n
\n‘Over my dead body!’ Cutler’s hand automatically went for his pistol. \n
\nThe giant was faster. Its arm shot out and its forearm stopped less than an inch from Cutler’s throat. ‘If you resist you will be killed.’\n
\nThe cold metal pressed against Cutler’s throat, forcing him backwards. He knew it could break his neck without any effort. Whatever this was it was immensely strong. \n
\n‘All right,’ he conceded. ‘All right.’\n
\nThe Cyberman, as it had called itself, lifted Cutler’s pistol from his holster with its free hand. It squeezed the barrel until it was almost flat and the, gripping the distorted weapon in both hands, tore it apart, throwing the broken, twisted metal away.\n
\n‘Nobody do anything stupid,’ Cutler said. ‘Everybody stay calm.’\n
\nThe Cyberman moved through the Command Room before returning to Cutler. ‘You have a bomb here.’\n
\n‘A bomb? Cutler played ignorant. ‘I don’t know what you mean.’\n
\nThe Cyberman made a slight gesture. Without warning, one of the other Cybermen shot a scientist squarely in the chest, holding the blast for long enough to char through to the man’s ribs. He was dead before he began to fall.\n
\n‘There was no need for that!’ Cutler yelled.\n
\nThe Cyberman fired again. This time it shot a scientist in the head. His skin peeled and blistered, burning away from the muscle and bone beneath. His head made a disgusting wet sound as he crashed to the floor.\n
\n‘You have a bomb,’ the Cyber Leader repeated.\n
\n‘Yes!’ Caterine Evans broke the silence and spoke. ‘Yes, we have a bomb.’\n
\n‘You call it a Z-Bomb,’ the Cyberman said. Again, there was no hint if this was a statement or a

question.\n
\nCutler opened his mouth to speak but Evans cut across him. ‘General, in case you hadn’t noticed, every time you speak they kill one of us, so please, for pity’s sake, keep your mouth shut.’\n
\nCutler had to bite down hard on a retort. He would make Evans pay for that. He would make these Cybermen pay, too. But for now he stayed silent and nodded reluctantly.\n
\n‘Yes,’ Evans said to the Cyber Leader. ‘They call it a Z-Bomb.’\n
\n‘You will disarm and dismantle this bomb,’ the Leader said.\n
\n‘We will not,’ Cutler said firmly. He placed himself in front of the Cyber Leader. ‘We will not leave ourselves defenceless against an unknown enemy.’\n
\n‘We are not your enemy,’ the Leader said blandly. ‘We are your future.’\n
\n‘What’s that supposed to mean?’ Cutler demanded.\n
\nThe answer was slow and menacing. ‘You will be converted. You will all become like us.’\n
\n‘Not on your life!’ Cutler snarled. He spun to face the staff. ‘Nobody will help these monsters, is that clear?’\n
\nThe Leader raised its weapon, aimed at Cutler.\n
\nA Cyberman weapon whine loudly in the enclosed space. \n
\nCutler was still standing.\n
\nThe Cyberman on the stairs fell, spewing smoke from its chest unit and mouth. The Cyberman at the top of the stairs released an electronic whine as solvent turned its inner working to liquid. Oily white liquid spewed up through its mouth as it collapsed. Tom and Jim and leaped the rail to confront the final Cyberman. They dodged its arms, squirting solvent into its chest unit. The scientists had attacked, trying to pin the Leader’s hands as they squirted the solution into its chest. The Leader flailed, sending them all crashing across the room. \n
\n‘Stay clear!’ Jules yelled. He fired at the Leader’s chest from the stairs. The Leader’s knees buckled. He fired again. The volatile compounds inside of the solvents caught fire. The Leader’s innards liquefied and burned at the same time. It thrashed pathetically before falling face down.\n
\nCutler stared at the newcomers in astonishment. Less than fifteen seconds ago he had been an instant from death and everything was lost. Now these Cybermen lay dead thanks to these strangers.\n
\n‘Who are you guys?’ he demanded. ‘Where did you come from?’\n
\nCaterine Evans answered the question by wrapping Jules Benoit in a huge hug. ‘Jules. How did you get here?’\n
\nGeneral Cutler immediately made the link. ‘Jules? Jules Benoit from the Gravitron base on the Moon?’ He recognised Jim from his earlier vidlink conversation. ‘You were on the Moon, too.’\n
\n‘Yes, General,’ Jules answered.\n
\nCutler also wanted an answer to Evans’ question. ‘How did you get here?’\n

\nJules looked uncertain as to how to answer. ‘We had a ship,’ he said. ‘A small one.’\n
\n‘Well I’m glad you did,’ Cutler conceded. ‘We were in trouble. Though I guess that trouble was what brought you here. You know about these Cybermen things?’\n
\n‘We do.’ Jules quickly introduced his two companions. ‘Tom and Jim might be able to answer better.’\n
\n‘They get into the moonbase by tunnelling in,’ Jim said.\n
\n‘And they want to use the Gravity-tron thing as a weapon to attack Earth,’ Tom added.\n
\n‘That’s true,’ Jim agreed. ‘They found out about your bomb when they took over the Control Room.’\n
\n‘They tortured Nils to make him talk,’ Jules said bitterly. ‘They tortured him and then they just shot him down like a rabid animal.’\n
\n‘Well, it’s our turn to shoot now,’ Cutler said. He snatched up the Cyber Leader’s fallen weapon. He inspected it for a moment before thrusting it into the hands of the nearest soldier. ‘Get the other weapons, take two men and defend the entrance. If more of them come they’ll get a taste of their own fire.’ The soldier saluted and hurried away to obey his orders. Cutler nodded, his nostrils flaring in excitement. He spoke, mostly to himself, becoming feverishly excited. ‘And then we hit them hard with the Z-Bomb.’\n
\n‘No,’ Jim blurted. ‘That’s the other thing we came to tell you. Don’t fire your bomb.’\n
\n‘Why the devil not?’ Cutler roared.\n
\nJules Benoit answered. ‘Because our scientists say it will kill half of the life on Earth as well as destroying Mondas.’\n
\n‘Mondas?’\n
\n‘That’s the name of their planet,’ Tom explained.\n
\nCutler shook his head obstinately. The Cyberman had said that, hadn’t it? He didn’t care. ‘There’s no other way. That planet needs to be destroyed.’\n
\n‘We’ll beat the Cybermen another way,’ Jim argued.\n
\nTom joined in. ‘The Doctor always finds a way.’\n
\n‘Doctor? Which Doctor?’ Cutler demanded.\n
\n‘A scientist helping us at the moonbase,’ Jules explained. ‘He’s sure billions will die if you fire the bomb.’\n
\nCutler felt his trust in these newcomers disintegrating. They were with that old fool on the Moon. They had been brave enough to risk coming here with their warning and they had attacked these Cybermen monsters but they didn’t have the stomach to see things through to the end. They didn’t have the integrity. They didn’t have the guts.\n
\n‘Sergeant!’ Cutler bellowed.\n
\nA sergeant ran to Cutler’s side and saluted. ‘Sir.’\n
\n‘Disarm and arrest these men. Lock them up.’\n
\n‘Wait a minute!’ Jim objected.\n

\nJules was also irate. ‘General, you can’t do this!’\n
\n‘We just saved your lives!’ Tom shouted.\n
\nTheir arguments made little impression on Cutler and his men were too cowed by him to disobey. All three men were disarmed, even of their fire extinguishers full of solvent, and marched up the steps towards the door.\n
\nCaterine Evans found her voice. ‘General, I must protest your actions here.’\n
\n‘Later,’ Cutler spat. ‘Protest all you like later. ‘You’ll do your job first or I’ll lock you up with those weaklings.’\n
\n‘Weakling?’ Caterine shook her head. ‘They saved your life, General. Your life. You were a second away from being dead.’\n
\n‘But I’m not dead,’ Cutler said coldly, ‘and I’m still in command. Get the bomb ready or it’s mutiny, and you know what happens to traitors who commit mutiny.\n
\nCutler turned his back and stalked away leaving Evans utterly lost.\n
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\nSusan was not happy.\n
\nShe had travelled with her grandfather more than anyone else and yet when things got dangerous they still tried to treat her like she was a little kid. \n
\nSusan managed to sit in the room for a few minutes before frustration won out and she peered out into the corridor. The lack of hulking silver giants was positive. She crept out into the corridor and followed the direction Tom and the others were going to take. She had just turned into another corridor when she heard Jim’s familiar voice protesting.\n
\n‘Will you take your hands off me?’\n
\nHad they been caught by the Cybermen? What had happened to the others? She also heard Tom’s voice.\n
\n‘We saved your lives, you ungrateful lot!’\n
\n‘Don’t waste your breath.’ That was Jules Benoit. ‘They’re military. Toy soldiers always do what their officer says, even when he’s a lunatic and he’s going to kill their entire families.’ There was a yelp. A soldier had obviously taken offence at Jules’ words.\n
\nThe voices were getting closer. Susan opened a door and looked inside. It was a small cupboard and she quickly slipped inside. Heavy footsteps clumped past her hiding spot a few moments later. She waited until they were well past her cupboard before peeking out and following the sound of the footsteps. She stopped at the end of a corridor and peered around. A soldier was pulling a door shut. Susan was ready to run back to her cupboard but the soldiers took another route away from the makeshift cell. She waited a few minutes in case they should come back but the corridor remained resolutely empty. Making sure there was no-one waiting to catch her, Susan hurried to the door. The lock really did look ridiculously easy to crack. If it took more than thirty seconds she would be disappointed with herself.\n
\nShe tapped nonchalantly on the door. ‘Tom? Jim? Are you comfortable in there?’\n

\nShe hear Jim’s startled voice, muffled by the door. ‘Susan? What are you doing here?’\n \n‘So,’ Susan asked, ‘do you want me to open this door or should I go back to hiding and leave all of this to you?’\n

\nCHAPTER NINE\n
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\nA War on Two Fronts\n
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\nAt Dr Who’s request, four look-outs had been placed up in Dr Martens’ astronomy platform to watch for any sign of new action from the Cybermen, who had all disappeared over a rise after Tardis had taken off.\n
\n‘They will be up to something,’ the old man had said. ‘We must be wary.’\n
\nWhen the Cybermen did show their hand it started with a distraction.\n
\nIt was Vanessa who was first to voice the alarm. ‘I think there’s a spaceship coming in.’\n
\nDr Who and Commander Hobson had hurried up to the platform, Dr Who had put his pince-nez on his nose and then twisted a small control on the old glasses turning them into binoculars. I think you’re right, my dear.’\n
\nHobson agreed. ‘And it’s not one of ours.’\n
\nThe short range radio crackled and the dull monotone of a Cyberman buzzed out. ‘Moonbase, you will surrender and open the main hatch.’\n
\nHobson indicated for Dr Martens’ panel to be patched in to the radio. \n
\n‘Surrender now and open the hatch,’ the Cyberman repeated.\n
\n‘I don’t think so,’ Hobson answered. ‘We’ve found your mouse hole and closed it up. You won’t get in that way either. You’re locked out and you’re staying out.’ The radio was silent for a second. Hobson smiled in satisfaction. ‘Cat’s got your tongue now, hasn’t it?’\n
\nA high, vicious whine screeched from the speakers. Everyone’s hands flew to their ears trying to block out the appalling noise. The pain from the pulsing screech was unbearable. It tore into Hobson’s hear until it felt that his skull was being split apart\n
\n‘Switch it off!’ Hobson tried to yell. Nobody could hear him. The sound was affecting their balance. Two lost their equilibrium and buckled to the ground. Blood had started to seep from the eyes, ears and noses of some of the staff. Hobson began to stumble down the stairs. If he could break the power connection on the radio set... His knees disobeyed and Hobson found himself lying on the stairs. His crew was also down, unable to move. The pain was too much. He couldn’t bear it. He just wanted it to stop. He had to save his men but the pain... \n
\nA shadow fell across the steps by Hobson’s head.\n
\nHe struggled to focus. Was it the Cybermen already?\n
\nBright blue eyes stared at him from under a furrowed brown and bushy eyebrows. Though clearly suffering with the effects of the terrible noise, Dr Who was trying to focus on opening a small box. From inside he produced two small white objects. He placed one in each ear and tapped the left ear. Almost immediately Hobson saw the old man straighten and draw a deep breath. He leaned over Hobson and said something before disappearing from Hobson’s sight.

What felt like an eternity later, the noise abruptly stopped.\n
\nAt least Hobson thought that it had stopped. His ears didn't register it anymore but somehow he could still hear it in his brain. He heard something distantly, a voice. It was Dr Who, hurrying from crewmember to crewmember, seeing how badly injured they were.\n
\nHobson forced himself upright. He was the base commander. He had to show the crew that he was capable of leading them. He pulled himself upright and lurched across to Dr Who.\n
\n'How are they all?' Did he really sound that shaken?\n
\n'Hmm?' Dr Who answered in confusion. 'Oh.' He removed the little white pods from his ears. 'I'm so sorry, my dear fellow. No, what was that?'\n
\n'I asked how they are,' Hobson answered.\n
\n'Oh, they'll be fine,' Dr Who answered. 'Of course, had they been exposed to that terrible racket for much longer the damage to their brains and various other organs would have become permanent.'\n
\n'How did you avoid the effects of the noise?' Hobson asked. He pointed at the white objects in the old man's hand. 'What are those things?'\n
\nDr Who looked embarrassed, especially as he saw Vanessa, Louise and Giselle Martens joining them. 'Well,' he said, 'I live with rather a lot of young people and the music they listen to is, well, let us say that it is not precisely to my taste. These ear-pieces are a little invention of mine. They block absolutely all signals from entering through the ears.'\n
\nLouise hugged her uncle. 'I've never been so glad that you're a fuddy-duddy.'\n
\nDr Who smiled. 'Well, what matters now is that we all survived and we are all right.' He froze, his head tilted like an aged gun-dog. 'What is that sound?'\n
\nHobson automatically turned to the radio. Cables had been ripped from the wall. 'The radio's off.'\n
\n'Not that,' Dr Who said urgently, looking around the room. 'Something else, something small... something...'\n
\nHobson heard it, a metallic scuttling. Something was moving.\n
\nA scream filled the Control Room. It was Lars. He was trying pull one of the spidery metallic head-pieces that had been used by the Cybermen to control their puppets. The spidery legs clawed at Lars' head, trying to attach themselves to him. The thing looked impossible strong. Two of its legs found purchase on Lars' skin and tried to embed their claws in his flesh. It moved with the relentless fury of a living thing. Lars' hand slipped and the metal spider attached two more legs to his face. Lars screamed.\n
\nHe screamed again as Hobson ripped the creature from his friend's face. It cost Lars skin and blood but that didn't matter. The commander smashed the metal spider down on a worktop again and again and again until it broke into a thousand pieces and its lights dimmed and died.\n
\nHe stared at the broken remains of the spider. He had put all of his rage and frustration into destroying the mechanical creature. He had taken real satisfaction from putting an end to the

thing.\n
\nHe heard the scuttling again.\n
\n‘There were two of them, remember,’ Dr Who called.\n
\nOf course. The old scientist was right.\n
\n‘Find it!’ Hobson yelled. ‘Find that thing!’\n
\nThey heard it, metal scuttling against the dark surfaces in the shadows. Plastic, metal, ceramic. It was fast, moving back and forth in the darkness, throwing its hunters off. \n
\n‘Where is it?’ Hobson demanded\n
\nThey heard the scuttling again.\n
\n‘There!’ Louise shouted. \n
\nThe metal spider scuttled under a heavy cabinet on wheels.\n
\n‘We’ll get it,’ Hobson promised. \n
\nHe waved for his men to approach but Dr Who wafted a hand dismissively. ‘No need for that.’\n
\nDr Who picked up one of the fire extinguishers full of Susie Cocktail. ‘This will do the trick,’\n
\nHobson stood in Dr Who’s way. ‘This thing’s metal, not plastic. That solvent won’t dissolve it.’\n
\n‘I know,’ Dr Who said affably. He eased his way around Hobson and began spraying the solvent. To everyone’s surprised he didn’t squirt the solvent at the spider-machine. Instead he squirted the four casters under the cabinet, giving each a good dousing. Thirty seconds later, one of the wheels began to melt and distort. At roughly forty five seconds the wheels gave way, dissolving to mush, and the cabinet collapsed, depositing its entire weight into the metal spider, crushing it.\n
\nDr Who gave a rather satisfied smirk. ‘As I was saying, I wasn’t going to squirt the beastie itself.’\n
\n‘Uncle.’ Vanessa’s voice cut Dr Who’s satisfaction short.\n
\n‘What is it, my dear?’ Dr Who asked.\n
\nVanessa was pointing out of the transparent dome at the large silver spaceship coming to land just past the nearest rise of hills. It was long and slim, tapering from a cylinder to a sharp dart point at the front. Retractable delta wings showed that it was capable of in-atmosphere flying. The multiple weapons ports on either side spoke of a devastating attacking capability.\n
\n‘What can we do against that?’ Louise asked.\n
\nFor once Dr Who didn’t have an answer.\n
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\nCaterine Evans worked mechanically. She did her tasks as slowly as she could get away with while she desperately tried to think of a way to contact Geneva or Washington to have General Cuter relieved. At her side, Barclay would be useless. He would change opinion as quickly as the un-controlled weather. She liked Barclay but there was no doubt that the man was a terrible coward. With Jules and his friends locked up, Caterine was on her own. She sighed.\n
\nA flicker of movement at the door just up those few steps caught her attention. Probably a

soldier coming back, she thought. She began to turn her head but instinct registered that the waving hand and shaking head meant she should not to that, so she turned the twist of her head into a yawn and a stretch. As she did her heart leaped when she saw that it was Jules with his two friends and a teenage girl. Jules was beckoning for Caterine to join them.\n
\nShe knew she couldn't do that. She was on duty. She couldn't leave her station. On the other hand if she was ill...\n
\nCaterine Evans stood, leaned over her computer and hit ENTER. She turned to head for the stairs and found General Cutler standing in her path.\n
\n'Going somewhere?' he asked. 'Let me tell you that the answer to that is "No!" by the way.'\n
\n'Sickbay,' Caterine answered. 'The nerves of this are getting to me. I hit my head when the Cybermen attacked as well. You know, trying to hold that one.' She pointed at the metal remains of a Cyberman.\n
\nCutler didn't believe her, she knew it. He just didn't buy it.\n
\n'I could bring back something we could give everybody,' she suggested. 'At least pain relief for the injured.'\n
\nAppealing to an officer about tending the needs of the men under his command was a low trick and Caterine didn't regret using it for one moment.\n
\n'All right, Cutler said, 'you have five minutes.'\n
\n'Do you need anything?' Caterine asked. It wouldn't hurt to offer to help Cutler. It wouldn't hurt to actually help him if she could either.\n
\nHis eyes were dead as he answered. 'I want my son back. Can you get me that?' He shook his head. 'No, you can't get me anything.'\n
\nEvans left Cutler behind and made her way to the base's Sickbay. Soon after the door opened and Jules led his party in. She caught him in a hug before quickly getting back on track.\n
\n'How did you get out of your cell?' she asked.\n
\nThe girl in the party lifted a hand and waved. 'Me. Although I'm supposed to stay out of the way and leave the big, tough men to deal with it all.'\n
\n'All right,' Jim conceded. 'You made your point. No more treating you like a kid.'\n
\nTom pulled the conversation back to their current problem. 'What can we do? The Doctor said we have to stop that bomb. How do we do it?'\n
\nEvans thought hard. 'It's mounted on a rocket and you can't get to that.'\n
\nJim rubbed his chin. 'Could we bung up its fuel line?'\n
\n'It's already fuelled,' Evans answered.\n
\n'What about the warhead?' Tom asked. 'Can we remove that somehow?'\n
\n'It's not in the launcher yet,' Evans replied. 'It automatically slides into position as part of the launch process. Normally it's held in a chamber where it can be serviced and maintained.'\n
\n'And how well protected is that?' Jim asked.\n
\n'You need security clearance to get into the weapons zone,' Evans answered. 'There are

usually two sets of guards. One outside the zone and one just outside the warhead chamber. The outer guards have been sent to join the troops defending against another Cyberman attack.'\n
\n'So we only have to deal with two trained killers,' Jim muttered. 'That's something.'\n
\nEvans pulled an ID badge from her pocket and pressed it into Jules' hand. 'This will get you inside the zone. I'll give you directions that will let you access the warhead chamber through a side shaft that will mean you can bypass the sentries. They won't see you enter the zone and there aren't any windows into the chamber. They won't see you.'\n
\nThat plan met with approval and a round of nods. \n
\n'Right,' Jim said, 'now how do we disarm the biggest bomb in history?'\n
\n \n
\nEvans returned to her position in the Command Room a few minutes later than the five minute limit General Butler had given her. She was aware that he watched her suspiciously. From the pockets of her white lab coat she pulled a mixture of pain medication and anti-inflammatories as well as the strictly controlled pills used to extend awareness and sharpness among crew. They were considered dangerously addictive and no-one was allowed more than one dose every four weeks, and a maximum of three doses in a calendar year. Evans also produced bandages and anaesthetic gels.\n
\n'Doesn't hurt to be prepared,' she said to Cutler before taking one of the painkillers.\n
\nThe General didn't reply directly but spoke to the room. 'Anybody that was hurt in the attack or needs sharpened, fix yourself up now. We've got work to do.'\n
\nEvans almost sighed. She stamped down on it, hiding her relief that he had accepted her story. A stream of men approached the desk to medicate, and Evans wondered how General Cutler would react when he found out about her betrayal.\n
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\nTo everyone's relief, Caterine Evans had been right about the first set of sentries having moved. Jules led the little group through a hatch marked AUTHORISED PERSONNEL ONLY having used Evans' pass to get through. The door slid closed behind them. They followed the route she had explained and found a hatch about mid-way up a wall which led into a long passage about twelve feet in length with a matching hatch at the far end and another at the side. They clambered into this passage and through the far hatch which led into an antiseptic white room in the middle of which was a drum-shaped device about six feet high by four feet across at the bottom and slightly narrower at the top. With everyone inside, Tom closed the hatch behind them and secured it in place.\n
\nJim was already working with Jules Benoit to remove the outer casing of the bomb. They all knew they didn't have much time.\n
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\nTime was also running out on the Moon.\n

\nAfter the Cybermen’s ship had landed it had only been a few minutes before distant silver figures had been spotted, marching resolutely across the Moon’s dusty surface. They moved in groups of ten, bringing equipment from their ships and taking up assigned positions. There was a rarely used maintenance level above the astronomy area, and from there Vanessa and Louise had been able to see a good part of the Cyberman ships and pinpoint their positions. \n
\nThe Cybermen marched resolutely across the lunar surface. They were unhurried, their faces implacable and incapable of emotion. They were remorseless, moving with purpose until they formed an arc around the entrances to the moonbase. \n
\nAnd then they stopped.\n
\nA hundred yards from the base they stopped, every blank face staring into the base.\n
\nAnd they waited.\n
\nAnd they waited.\n
\n‘Why don’t they make their move?’ Hobson said. He sounded agitated.\n
\n‘Precisely so that we will react emotionally,’ Dr Who said calmly. ‘They want us to feel fear, to become on edge, as you are doing now.’\n
\nHobson scowled in reply. ‘Can you blame me?’\n
\n‘Not in the slightest,’ Dr Who answered in a remarkably calm tone, ‘but it is worth remembering that the Cybermen could easily destroy this base and kill everyone in it if they so chose.’\n
\n‘So why don’t they?’ Hobson grumbled.\n
\nDr Who indicated the Gravitron. ‘They want your Gravitron, remember, and to use that they need people to operate it. Gravity waves affect them, if you recall.’\n
\n‘So what are they doing? Digging another tunnel?’\n
\nDr Who pursed his lips. ‘No, that would take too much time. This is a show of force. They are trying to make us afraid, reasoning that fear will make us surrender.’\n
\nHobson snorted. ‘Surrender? That’ll be the day.’\n
\nDr Who patted the commander on the shoulder. ‘That is more like it, Mr Hobson. If they had not abandoned their humanity they might have remembered exactly how stubborn a species man is.’\n
\n‘You’re not the first person to call me that,’ Hobson said wryly. ‘I’m from Yorkshire. Being stubborn is an art form in my family.’\n
\n‘Good,’ Dr Who said, but his humour faded as he looked out at the distant line of silver giants glinting in the sun’s light. ‘They will not wait forever,’ he said. ‘They will make their move soon and we should be ready for it.’\n
\nOn cue there was a sort of popping sound followed by an abrupt rush of wind. Cups and papers flew through the air towards the transparent wall of the dome. Suddenly it was incredibly hard to breathe.\n
\nClutching a panel to avoid being yanked off his feet by this wind, Dr Who scanned the clear domed wall. About five feet above floor level a hole the size of a fist had appeared in the outer

wall, venting the base’s air to the Moon’s surface.\n
\nThe Cybermen had punctured the dome.\n
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\nSilence had fallen on the Command Room of the Polar Ice Cap Base. Caterine Evans worked methodically, following General Cutler’s instructions as slowly as she could get away with. Cutler himself stared at his computer screen, monitoring progress throughout the base. The room was so quiet that when he spoke it made Evans jump.\n
\n‘With strangers and these Cybermen around I think everybody should have their identity passes on show.’ He turned and looked squarely at Evans. ‘Don’t you, Dr Evans?’\n
\nSomehow he knew what was happening.\n
\nShe had been caught out.\n

\nCHAPTER TEN\n
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\nAttack of the Cybermen\n
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\nThe crew in the moonbase’s Control Room gasped for air, desperately clawing for the emergency air masks that had been released from a roof panel in the centre of the room. Some could barely move, some had already fallen unconscious and were being manhandled across by their colleagues.\n
\nHobson had helped Dr Who to the middle of the room. The old scientist seemed to be affected far more than Hobson himself. He eased a mask over the Doctor’s face and then donned one himself. He looked around desperately, trying to think of a way to save the base, to save his crew.\n
\nHe saw movement.\n
\nVanessa and Louise were approaching from the steps, helping Giselle Martens between them. The Doctor’s nieces looked less troubled than his crew. Of course they would. He remembered that the topmost observation platform also had emergency air masks. They must have breathed deeply before helping Martens.\n
\nHobson pulled a chair across for the young women to help Martens slump into. Hobson pulled the mask from his face and placed it on Martens’ face. He reached for another for himself, seeing the two young women holding masks to their faces while they communicated through gestures, pointing and nodding as their plan was worked out. Louise gave an old thumbs-up gesture and then they were both gone, lurching towards the hole in the dome, clinging together for support against the gale of escaping air. A clear, circular tray that had been used for bringing coffee to the Control Room had skidded across the floor and rested against the dome. Between them, the two women picked up the tray and held it against the transparent wall, sliding it upwards towards the hole in the dome. They stopped with the top of the tray just under the hole and he saw Louise’s mouth counting upwards, ‘One, two, three...’ On “three” they slid the tray upwards and over the hole. The tray slammed into place, covering the hole with several inches of clearance all the way around and with the air pressure inside of the dome holding it in place. Sure that the tray was safe and in place, the two women stumbled back to the centre of the room, gratefully accepting the masks held out to them by Dr Who. They gulped the air hungrily.\n
\nHobson pulled his mask away. The air was thin. He operated the control to release the emergency air supply into the base. The oxygen manufacturing plant would automatically begin replenishing that back-up supply. A hissing sound signalled that the air was being pumped into the Control Room.\n
\n‘Get sealant around that tray,’ Hobson yelled. ‘Make it secure.’ Chen Lim and another of the crew hurried away to follow his orders.\n

\n‘Well done, both of you,’ Dr Who was saying to Vanessa and Louise. ‘Jolly well done. That was quick thinking.’\n
\n‘It was,’ Hobson agreed, ‘but the Cybermen can do it again any time they want. They can turn this dome into Swiss Cheese.’\n
\n‘Not if they want to keep people alive,’ Dr Who argued. ‘This was an expression of power.’\n
\nVanessa tugged at Dr Who’s arm. ‘Doctor...’\n
\n‘What is it, my dear?’ Dr Who asked. Vanessa was pointing out onto the lunar surface. The Cybermen were moving what looked like a giant gun of some size into position on the dusty plain. Even as they set it up, its barrel was loosely aimed at the base.\n
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\nCaterine Evans had been caught by her own security pass. General Cutler had become so paranoid and suspicious that he was monitoring every use of the pass cards within the base. He had seen Evans’ pass used to enter the secure military zone when she was at that moment seated by his side.\n
\nWith two soldiers bringing up the rear, Cutler marched Evans and Barclay to the military zone and through to the doorway leading into the bomb’s holding chamber. When the door was pulled open they found the three escaped men and a teenage girl staring at the bomb. An outer panel had been removed but it seemed they hadn’t had time to affect the innards of the device.\n
\n‘Shoot them if they move,’ Cutler ordered.\n
\nThe four in the chamber slumped. They knew they had lost. \n
\n‘The pass gave you away,’ Evans told Jules. ‘He was monitoring their use.’\n
\nJules looked desolate. He shrugged but there was no real defiance left in him. ‘We couldn’t get past the outer casing.’\n
\nGeneral Cutler was not willing to take any chances on his captives’ words. ‘Check it,’ he ordered Barclay. ‘Make sure it’s all in order.’\n
\nWhile the soldiers hurried the intruders out of the weapon’s chamber, Barclay went inside and inspected the Z-Bomb.\n
\nAs he passed the General, Jim stopped. ‘Look, General, you don’t know me from Adam but every scientist here will tell you the same thing. If you launch that bomb you’ll kill half of the world’s population.’\n
\n‘And if I don’t, the Cybermen will kill everybody on Earth,’ Cutler growled in reply. \n
\n‘The Doctor won’t let that happen,’ Tom protested. ‘He’ll find another answer.’\n
\nCutler’s expression remained resolute. ‘The old dinosaur on the Moon? If you’re pinning your hopes on him I’ll stick to the bomb.’\n
\n‘He’s the most inventive scientist you’ll ever meet,’ Jim snapped. ‘If anybody can sort this out, it’s him.’\n
\n‘I don’t have time for “if”, boy,’ Cutler snapped.\n
\n‘The bomb is still intact, General,’ Barclay reported timidly. ‘Everything is intact.’\n

\nCutler gave a grimly satisfied smile. ‘Good. Get that cover back on.’ He leaned hard on an intercom on the wall. ‘This is Cutler. Begin launch countdown.’\n
\n‘General,’ Evans complained, ‘you don’t have authority from Geneva to fire this weapon.’\n
\n‘I have the authority from my son.’ The intercom beeped for attention. He hit the button to reply. ‘What is it?’\n
\nA voice crackled through tinnily. ‘Ground cameras and sensors say something is moving outside.’\n
\n‘I’m on my way.’ He glared briefly at his captives. ‘Come with me.’\n
\nWith that he ran from the room.\n
\nDespite his age, General Cutler moved at a sharp pace through the polar base and they all arrived back in the Command Room very soon afterwards. Cutler didn’t wait for any kind of greeting or explanation from his subordinates. \n
\n‘Show me,’ Cutler bellowed.\n
\nSix screens lowered from the ceiling. Each one showed the blizzard outside.\n
\n‘Screen three,’ a technician said.\n
\nEveryone’s attention focused on the third screen. Sure enough, there seemed to be something solid moving through the snow. It was indistinct but it was definitely there.\n
\n‘Can you enlarge?’ Jim asked.\n
\nCutler scowled then accepted the request as reasonable. ‘Well?’ he demanded. ‘Can you?’\n
\n‘No, sir.’\n
\n‘There’s no need,’ said Tom. ‘Here they come.’\n
\nHe was right. Powerful figures were now moving clearly into view, the handles on their heads utterly unmistakable.\n
\n‘Every man in uniform up top,’ Cutler barked. ‘Hold those things off.’ Soldiers ran from the room.\n
\n‘Do you have any spare weapons?’ Jules Benoit asked? ‘I’ll join them.’\n
\n‘So will we,’ added Tom.\n
\n‘As if I’d trust you,’ Cutler said bitterly. ‘Evans, how long is the countdown on this launcher?’\n
\n‘Sixty minutes,’ Caterine Evans answered automatically.\n
\nCutler rapped a hand on the desk. ‘That’s no use to me. What’s the shortest you can cut it to? Don’t look at anybody. Don’t try to trick me. Just tell the truth. What’s the quickest you can cut it to?’\n
\n‘Emergency launch is three minutes,’ Evans answered miserably.\n
\n‘Do it,’ Cutler ordered, ‘or I’ll shoot your friend from the Moon. Is that clear enough?’\n
\nEvans nodded and operated a few controls. A countdown sitting at 3:00 appeared on Cutler’s screen. ‘You hit ENTER to start the countdown and when it reaches zero you hit ENTER again. That’s how the computer knows you really ordered the launch.’\n
\nWith satisfaction, General Cutler slammed a finger down on the ENTER key.\n

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\nThere was no subtlety or guile in the Cybermen’s attack on the entry to the polar base. Their strategy was based on brute force, technical superiority and numbers. They held off on shooting until the soldiers defending the base opened fire. As soon as the first bullet deflected harmlessly off a metal body the Cybermen unleashed a constant rain of fire. The doors were blasted from the domed entrance to the base and chunks of the walls disintegrated. One blast from a Cyberweapon caught a soldier who had been sheltering behind the door square in the chest sending him backwards over the metal railing.\n
\nThe Cybermen advanced relentlessly, firing at their prey, untroubled by the mosquito bites of the humans’ bullets.\n
\nA WHOOMPH cut through the howl of the gale and the sound of gunfire. A second later a small shoulder-fired rocket slammed into the chest of a Cyberman. The explosion tore the chest unit from the Cyberman and shattered the front of its helmet revealing bone and tissue beneath, but the soldier’s sense of elation was short lived. Two Cybermen shot him simultaneously, their weapons turning him into a column of flame.\n
\nThe Cybermen marched on, ignoring their fallen comrade. When they were within five yards of the entrance the small mounds of snow on either side of them burst upwards. Four soldiers, all carrying captured Cyberweapons opened fire on the invaders. The Cybermen buckled and fell, the belching smoke from their bodies torn away by the blizzard. \n
\nThe ambush had worked. They had let the Cybermen walk into a perfect killing zone.\n
\nThe Cybermen’s trap had also worked. \n
\nThey had been willing to sacrifice an advance guard to make the humans show whatever secret defences they might have. The humans who had been hiding hadn’t even had the time to return to their comrades before the next wave of Cybermen was on them. Ten attacked from either side in a pincer movement, cutting down five soldiers in the first seconds of the attack.\n
\nThe soldiers fell back. The two left alive who still held Cyberweapons kept up a constant fire but they couldn’t move fast enough to cut down every attacking Cyberman. The soldiers backed down the stairs, firing desperately. Passing through the security entrance they slammed and locked its one remaining hatch-like metal door and took up positions on either side of the corridor, taking cover in doorways and behind vending machines. Despite having been out in ferociously sub-zero conditions they were all sweating.\n
\nThere was silence.\n
\nNothing.\n
\nNothing.\n
\nThe door erupted inwards under a brutal onslaught of fire from the Cybermen and the battle was on again.\n
\nThe human soldiers defended with the desperation of men who knew they were doomed. They fired again and again. Those with Cyberweapons cut down two of the metal invaders then two

more. One of the soldiers was out of ammunition and made a dive to pick up the weapon of a fallen Cyberman. He was too slow. Another Cyberman slammed its weapon across his face. Blood from his broken nose and burst lip sprayed across the emotionless metal face. The soldier fell, unconscious. The Cyberman blasted him to oblivion anyway. \n
\nThe advance was faster. Every human soldier who fell made their progress easier. Eventually there was just one soldier left. He held a pistol. It clicked hollowly. He was out of ammunition. The Cybermen stood facing him, arranging themselves into two neat columns.\n
\n‘I surrender.’ The soldier dropped his pistol and raised his hands. ‘I’m unarmed. I surrender.’ \n
\nThere was no reply.\n
\n‘I said I surrender!’\n
\nThe two front Cybermen raised their weapons and fired. The blast took the soldier off of his feet, hurling him backwards into a metal wall. His charred, smoking body dropped to the floor.\n
\nThe Cybermen ignored him as they strode past.\n
\n \n
\nGeneral Cutler watched the numbers count down. He had heard the firing getting closer. There had been the mixed sounds of human and Cybermen weapons. Very quickly that had become primarily the Cyberweapons. And then it had become silent.\n
\n0:11\n
\nThe door to the Command Room burst in. Cybermen emerged onto the little gantry which led to the steps down into the Command Room.\n
\nA Cyberman was in the front of the group. It had a crimson spray of blood across its face. Obviously, this was the leader of this lot, Cutler thought. ‘Remain still.’ That same emotionless metal buzz.\n
\n0:08\n
\nCutler had to play for time. Just a little time. ‘You killed my men,’ he thundered. ‘How many are dead?’\n
\nThe Leader reached the bottom of the steps. ‘All of them,’ it answered flatly.\n
\n‘All of them?’ Cutler choked. Of course he should have expected that answer. He knew that. He had expected it. That didn’t make hearing it any easier.\n
\n0:05\n
\n‘All of them?’\n
\n‘Resistance is foolish,’ the Cyberleader buzzed.\n
\n‘Looks like you’re right,’ Cutlers said quietly. He slumped forward, leaning over his desk.\n
\n0:02\n
\n‘Of course,’ Cutler continued, we have a saying here about looks.’\n
\nThe Cyberleader took a step closer. ‘What is the saying?\n
\n0:00\n
\nCutler’s finger came down on ENTER. ‘Looks can be deceiving.’\n

\nThere was a huge metallic creaking sound from elsewhere in the base and then the entire complex began to vibrate.\n
\n‘What have you done?’ the Leader demanded.\n
\nCutler squared his shoulders and stood up to his full height. ‘Beaten you,’ he sneered. ‘That’s the Z-Bomb launching.’ He took a step closer to the Cyberleader. ‘You killed my son. I killed your planet.’\n
\nThe Leader stood as still as a statue for a long moment. When it moved the action was so fast the human eye could barely register the motion. A metal arm swept in a wide arc catching Cutler across the chest. The impact lifted the soldier off of his feet and sent him flying across the room where he smashed hard into a wall. He dropped to the floor like a rag doll. Jim and Tom hurried to the man’s side. The broken angle of his neck and the blood pouring from countless wounds told them that it was no use.\n
\n‘Dead,’ Jim said.\n
\n‘You will stop the missile,’ the Leader said. ‘Who is now in command here?’\n
\nJules Benoit had looked around and took a step forward.\n
\nCaterine Evans spoke first. ‘Technically, I am.’\n
\n‘You will stop the missile,’ the Cyberleader replied.\n
\n‘I can’t,’ Evans replied simply. \n
\nThe Leader raised its weapon and aimed at Evans’ face. ‘You will stop the missile.’\n
\n‘I can’t,’ she repeated. ‘You just killed the only person who could have stopped it.’\n
\n‘Which may have been his plan,’ added Jules Benoit. He had no idea if that was true or not but it backed what Evans had said. ‘He goaded you into killing him so he would never be able to stop it.’\n
\n‘He was insane,’ Jim added. ‘When Mondas closed on Earth it kicked a space station out of orbit. His son was on that station. The grief drove him mad.’\n
\n‘It’s true,’ Tom confirmed.\n
\nSusan stepped forward to challenge the Leader. ‘You must be able to detect that we’re telling the truth,’ she said. ‘You know how a human’s breathing and pulse rate changes when they lie. You must know the signs of lying. Apply those and you’ll know we’re telling the truth.’\n
\nThe Cyberleader was silent just for a second then it spun. ‘We must return to our ship. They are speaking the truth.’\n
\nThe Cybermen turned and left the room quickly. The Leader stopped at the doorway. ‘When our ship takes off this base and everything surrounding it will be obliterated.’\n
\nThe Leader turned and strode from the room.\n
\nEveryone took a moment to breathe, but only a moment.\n
\n‘We have to get everybody out of here,’ Tom said.\n
\n‘We have vehicles here,’ Evans said. ‘They’ll get us to the nearest base.’\n
\n‘We have something better,’ Susan said cheekily.\n

\nJim pointed at a microphone. ‘Get your people moving and we’ll show you.’\n
\nEvans activated the microphone. ‘This is Evans. Abandon the station. Take the vehicles and go. This place will be obliterated in a few minutes. Everybody, go!’\n
\nEveryone in the room ran for the exit.\n
\n \n
\nIt took the Cybermen just over five minutes to reach their ship. A few minutes later with a whine of power it lifted off from the ice. As soon as it reached the designated altitude the Cyberleader was as good as his word. A violent red beam lanced from a weapons’ port down at the base. A huge explosion shook the ground below, destroying everything for a mile around.\n
\nThe Cybermen’s spaceship accelerated upwards in pursuit of the missile.\n
\n \n
\n‘For people who say they have no emotions they’re very good at playing on them,’ Hobson said bitterly. ‘They’re still playing statues out there. We’re lucky they want the Gravitron.’\n
\n‘What does the Gravitron actually do?’ Vanessa asked. ‘I realise this may not be the time to ask but I feel rather foolish not knowing.’\n
\nIt was Giselle Martens who answered. ‘It directs controlled waves and bursts of gravity, which we use to control the weather.’\n
\nVanessa smiled wryly. ‘I’m sure that actually made sense because I recognised all of the words,’ she said politely, ‘but I’m afraid I didn’t understand the sentence.’\n
\n‘But I did!’ Dr Who clapped his hands together. ‘I have it.’ He caught Hobson’s arm. ‘How low can you aim the Gravitron?’\n
\nHobson was bemused by the question. ‘I’ve no idea. We’ve only ever aimed it at Earth.’\n
\nDr Who was positively hopping with excitement. ‘Could you aim it at the surface of the Moon?’\n
\n‘What are you thinking?’ Martens asked.\n
\nHobson saw what Dr Who was suggesting. ‘I think I understand you,’ he said, excitement growing in him. ‘And it might work,’\n
\n‘What might?’ Vanessa asked.\n
\n‘You’re going to use the Gravitron to beat the Cybermen?’ Louise asked.\n
\n‘Yes,’ Dr Who beamed. ‘That was a very good question you asked, Vanessa. Keep asking questions. The right question can provoke the perfect answer.’\n
\nThey hurried to catch up with Hobson, who was pulling a red pin from the base of the Gravitron. ‘Chen Lim, pull the other angular cut-out breaker, would you?’\n
\nChen Lim quickly did as he was asked. Hobson was already at the Gravitron’s controls. ‘Lowering the Gravitron now.’\n
\n‘Power it up,’ Dr Who suggested. ‘Quite a low level should be enough to protect us.\n
\n‘They’re moving!’ Louise was staring out of the clear dome at the arc of Cybermen. In unison they had started walking forward towards the base.\n

\n‘Something must have happened,’ Dr Who said. ‘I do so hope my family is all right.’\n
\n‘I’m sure they’re fine,’ Hobson replied. He didn’t sound convinced. He pointed at a power reading. ‘This?’\n
\nDr Who made an adjustment. ‘Try this first.’\n
\n‘All right.’ Hobson locked in the command. \n
\n‘Hold tight, everybody,’ Dr Who called. ‘This should be rather interesting.’\n
\nHobson’s hand came down on the control.\n
\n \n
\nA pulse came from the moonbase. With no air on the lunar surface its only initial physical manifestation was that the lunar soil rippled like a low tidal wave moving at speed away from the moonbase. The dust wave was only a few inches high but when it hit the approaching Cyberman a second after leaving the base the energy wave slammed into the metal giants hard and sent them flying backwards. They flew for a hundred yards before smashing into rocks or landing hard and skidding along the dusty surface. It had weakened by the time it reached the Cybermen by the large cannon but it still knocked them from their feet and shook the weapon.\n
\n \n
\nA cheer went up inside the moonbase’s Control Room as the crew saw their attackers skittled by the Gravitron.\n
\nDr Who quickly sounded a note of caution. ‘We have not won,’ he said. ‘That was a warning to them to leave without further conflict.’\n
\n‘I don’t think they’re listening,’ Louise said.\n
\n‘Hmm?’ Dr Who peered out across the dust plain.\n
\nLouise was right. A Cyberman had righted himself by the cannon. Its hand came down on a control and a spitting ball of electric blue energy hurtled towards the moonbase.\n

\nCHAPTER ELEVEN\n
\n \n
\nThe Final Battle\n
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\nThe ball of energy hurtled towards the moonbase. The crew turned away. Vanessa and Louis clutched each other in fear. Dr Who gently tapped a control.\n
\nThirty yards from the moonbase the bolt of energy was deflected up and out into space.\n
\nThe Cyberman fired again. \n
\nAgain, the energy bolt was deflected into space.\n
\nThe crew in the Control Room, straightened and looked out as a third energy bolt was deflected into space.\n
\n‘Uncle?’ Louise asked.\n
\n‘Splendid machine, this Gravitron,’ Dr Who said sagely. ‘May I?’ he asked Hobson.’\n
\n‘Of course,’ the commander answered.\n
\nDr Who’s old fingers eased over the controls as he increased power. ‘I rather think it’s time the Cybermen left the Moon.’ He brought his finger down on the control to send another pulse out across the lunar surface. This one was faster and agitated the dust higher. It slammed into the Cybermen harder. It shattered the most exposed Cybermen into a thousand pieces each. Others were lifted from the lunar surface and thrown upwards and out, away from the little world.\n
\n‘They’ll be beyond the Moon’s gravity in no time,’ Dr Who said. ‘They’ll drift forever unless they’re caught by a planet or a sun and then they’ll plunge into it and burn up.\n
\n‘Their ships are taking off,’ Vanessa called.\n
\nTwo silver craft had lifted off from the surface.\n
\n‘Running away, you scoundrels?’ Dr Who sounded outraged. ‘I don’t think so.’ He operated the controls again. The Gravitron pulsed. An instant later the nearer of the ships was struck by an invisible tsunami of energy. Its hull buckled under the impact and the ship smashed hard into the side of the other Cybership. Dr Who operated the control again and another wave of directed gravitation energy crashed into the ships sending them spinning out of control up into space where they were enveloped in a huge explosion.\n
\nDr Who touched a finger to his lips guiltily. ‘Ooh, was that me? I think I may have used too much power.’\n
\nThe Control Room was engulfed by more cheering.\n
\n \n
\nTardis had only just managed to take off from the icy surface of Antarctica before the Cybermen obliterated the Polar base.\n
\nCaterine Evans was having the usual shocked response of anyone entering the ship for the first time. Jules Benoit was holding her hand and trying to act in a most blasé manner about the

whole affair.\n
\nSusan, Jim and Tom were more interested in the progress of the Z-Bomb. Susan had materialised Tardis in space between Earth and Mondas. On their monitor they could see the missile streaking towards the new world, its powerful ion engine glowing gold. Behind it and closing was the Cybermen's spaceship.\n
\n'The bomb's on course for Mondas,' Susan said. 'If it continues on its current path it'll explode exactly where General Cutler wanted it to.'\n
\n'Will the Cybermen spaceship catch it?' Tom asked.\n
\n'No,' Jim answered before Susan could run the maths through the computer. 'It'll be less than a mile behind when the bomb explodes but it won't actually catch it.'\n
\nTom grimaced at his friend. 'It's really weird that you like maths that much.'\n
\n'It's really weird that you don't,' Jim answered with a grin. 'How long?' he asked Susan.\n
\n'A few seconds,' she answered, closing the monitor picture in on the missile. 'Now!'\n
\nA small piece of the nosecone ejected as the missile flew on. The Cybership flew past the ejected piece of metal as it chased after the missile.\n
\n'It worked,' Jim called to Evans and Benoit. 'The Z-Element was ejected. It'll be a big explosion but it won't kill half of the people on Earth.'\n
\n'Right, Tom said to Susan, 'we'd better get back to your grandfather.'\n
\n'And to your girlfriends,' Susan grinned cheekily.\n
\n'Not so fast.' Jim was adjusting a control on the communications panel. 'There's a transmission between the Cybermen's ship and Mondas. Listen.'\n
\nA metallic voice crackled. 'The Z-Bomb is incoming. It will detonate in twenty one Earth minutes.'\n
\nA second, deeper mechanical voice replied. 'We must launch the invasion now. Prepare the ships for launch. Continue your attempt to destroy the Earth missile.'\n
\nThe transmission ended. \n
\nThe interior of Tardis was also silent.\n
\n'We need to get back to the moonbase,' Jim said.\n
\nSusan had already operated the controls.\n
\n \n
\nIt was a mark of how the day had gone that virtually no-one batted an eye at the sight of a solid blue box suddenly appearing in the middle of the moonbase's Control Room.\n
\n'My ship,' Dr Who exclaimed by way of explanation. The door opened and Susan spilled out into a hug from her grandfather. Louise and Vanessa met Tom and Jim with affectionate embraces of their own.\n
\n'The Doctor forced the Cybermen off the Moon,' Louise said with a huge, excited smile.\n
\n'He was magnificent,' Vanessa added.\n
\n'It's not over,' Tom said quickly.\n

\nSusan agreed. ‘Jim picked up a transmission from Mondas.’\n
\n‘And what was that?’ Dr Who asked.\n
\n‘They’re launching their invasion fleet,’ Jim answered.\n
\n‘Oh, dear.’ Dr Who sucked his bottom lip. ‘Oh dear, oh dear.’ He glanced at Jim. ‘Did you at least stop the Z-Bomb?’\n
\n‘Sort of.’ Susan answered.\n
\n‘Sort of?’ Dr Who frowned.\n
\n‘What does “sort of” mean?’ Hobson demanded.\n
\nJules Benoit indicated for Caterine Evans to answer. ‘Dr Evans fixed it.’\n
\n‘There wasn’t time to dismantle the bomb,’ Evans explained, ‘and even if we did General Cutler would see that we had. I was able to tell them how to add a bit of computer code that would eject the Z-Element in flight. Without that it will be a very nasty explosion but not a planet killing one.’\n
\n‘Well, that is something,’ Dr Who said in relief. \n
\n‘Is it?’ Hobson asked. ‘We don’t have any weapon to use against them now. I mean, I agreed we should stop the Z-Bomb, now I’m not sure we were right.’\n
\n‘What about the Gravitron?’ Giselle Martens asked. ‘Can’t we use it to deflect their ships?’\n
\n‘I suppose we could,’ Hobson said. \n
\n‘It would depend how many there were,’ Jim said.\n
\n‘Unless we could destroy them on the ground,’ Dr Who said. ‘The Gravitron could hit their launch sites with pulses of gravity that would devastate their ships.\n
\n‘I’ll do it,’ Hobson said. ‘I’m commander. If we’re going to attack an alien planet I suppose it should be me who does it.’\n
\n \n
\nThe missile carrying the Z-Bomb continued to hurtle towards Mondas. Its engines continued to accelerate and it was now also being pulled to greater velocity by the mass of the planet ahead of it. The Cyberman spaceship behind continued to close, also benefitting from the draw of Mondas. They both shot past the defensive ships launched to attack the missile. \n
\nThe Cybership fired its weapons. The missile was still out of range. Logic stated that they would not catch the missile but orders had been given and they would obey orders.\n
\n \n
\nOn the surface of Mondas tens of thousands of Cybermen took their places in the invasion fleet. The ships were cramped and there were no comforts, but these were Cybermen. They didn’t need comforts. They didn’t need air. Conquest and the supremacy of the Cyber-race was their only goal. It was only by destroying or subjugating or converting others that the Cybermen would thrive. Earth would soon be theirs.\n
\nThe Cyber Controller’s voice filled every ship. ‘Standard five to launch.’\n
\nThe Cybermen secured themselves against the launch.\n

\nAnd then their world went mad.\n
\n \n
\nA launch pad which held five of the Cybermen's invasion fleet began to twist. The ships buckled as gravity on the pads increased. Suddenly it was a dozen times what it had been an instant before. The ships distorted, rending and tearing open under the onslaught of nature's most primal force. Launchpad after launchpad was devastated. The Cybermen couldn't move to help themselves. Even their great strength was no match for gravity.\n
\nTheir planet was no match for gravity. \n
\nLand masses compressed under its assault. Long dormant volcanic systems erupted back into life as the gravity on, around and even inside the planet changed turbulently every few seconds. Spaceships exploded on their launchpads but were as nothing compared to the sudden and violent eruptions of the planet's innards bursting through suddenly weakened areas of the planet's crust. \n
\nMondas' tectonic plates were pulled and pushed by the gravity, alternately crashed and pushed away from the surface.\n
\nThe planet began to tear itself apart.\n
\n \n
\nDr Who watched the fate of Mondas unfold on the monitor screens in the Control Room, a look of horror appearing on his face. 'What is happening?'\n
\n'The Gravitron,' Hobson answered quietly.\n
\nDr Who stared at him, aghast. 'You have used the power of the Gravitron to destroy that world. You only needed to destroy their ships.'\n
\n'They were coming to kill us all,' Hobson said simply. 'I didn't have a choice.'\n
\nAnother huge explosion flared from the vicinity of Mondas.\n
\n'The Z-Bomb,' Jim said. \n
\nOn the screen they saw the effects of the explosion. Added to the unleashed natural forces working at destroying the planet, the bomb's blast proved to be the final straw. A series of explosions erupted in a chain across the planet's surface until the surface split and the planet's interior began to seep outwards. And then there was a final, huge explosion which finally blasted Mondas into rubble.\n
\n'There could have been life on that world,' Dr Who said coldly. 'We did not know that the Cybermen were the only life there.' He turned and strode into Tardis. Before his family could follow, the door closed and with its usual soft whoosh, the ship was gone.\n
\n'Where's he gone?' Jim demanded.\n
\nSusan looked disconsolate. 'I don't know,' she answered.\n
\nThe triumph of victory had been taken from them by Dr Who's abrupt and angry departure, and there was an oddly anti-climactic atmosphere in the Control Room until a now recognisable whooshing sound heralded Tardis' return. A few seconds later the blue box was back exactly

where it had been a few moments before. The door opened and Dr Who emerged. He looked far calmer than he had when he left. \n
\nHobson moved forward, feeling compelled to mend the rift. ‘Doctor, I...’\n
\nDr Who held up a hand to quiet the commander. ‘A moment please, Commander.’ He turned to Giselle. ‘Dr Martens, I have someone here who would like to see you.’ He waved a hand inside Tardis and Captain Terry Cutler walked out, an amazed look on his face.\n
\n‘I don’t believe it,’ Terry Cutler said. Giselle Martens caught him in the tightest hug and he didn’t think of saying anything else for quite a time.\n
\nThe remainder of Zeus-1’s crew followed Cutler out into the Control Room, all looking equally confused.\n
\n‘The crew of Zeus-1?’ Hobson asked. ‘But how did you...?’\n
\n‘It was quite easy,’ Dr Who interrupted. ‘I was able to project their course and then follow them. I could not save their space station. That will burn up in the Sun.’ He nudged his head towards the screen. ‘I should advise that you do the same with the remains of Mondas or Earth will be bombarded by the debris for millennia.’\n
\n‘I will,’ Hobson agreed. ‘Look, Doctor, I know you don’t agree with me destroying Mondas that way...’\n
\n‘The Cybermen made their choice,’ Dr Who said. ‘They would have killed everyone on Earth and had to be stopped. I would have preferred a way that was not so devastating, but Tardis also travels in time, so I shall go to Mondas before the Cybermen developed and save some of its nature, transplanting it to another world.’\n
\n‘Good,’ Hobson said, mostly to himself. ‘Good.’\n
\nDr Who eased past Terry Cutler and Dr Martens to his family. ‘Well, I think we should go, don’t you?’\n
\n‘Do we have to? Jim asked. ‘We just won.’\n
\n‘Yes,’ Vanessa agreed. ‘It would be nice to see these people being happy.’\n
\nDr Who shrugged. ‘Well, if you don’t mind them putting us to work. There’s a lot to be done here.’\n
\nTom nudged Jim. ‘Maybe we should go.’\n
\nJim nodded. ‘There’s football on telly tonight, isn’t there?’\n
\nThey turned to Dr Who. ‘We’ll go,’ they said in unison.\n
\nWith a smile, Dr Who ushered his family into Tardis. Commander Hobson was busy using pulses of gravity that would clear the remains of Mondas into an orbit that would take them into the Sun, but Giselle Martens and Terry Cutler waved a farewell, as did Jules Benoit and Caterine Evans. \n
\nCommander Hobson turned as he heard Tardis take off. It was probably for the best, he thought. ‘All right,’ he called, ‘we’ve got work to do. If you’re from Zeus-1 we’ll find work for you. We’re short-handed. Come on, let’s get this place back in order.’\n

\nElsewhere and elsewhen, Tardis passed through time and space. Dr Who sat in his favourite armchair and looked at his family. Susan was busy studying readings. Louise and Vanessa were chatting about something and over by the laboratory Tom and Jim were laughing. He relaxed into his chair. He was a very lucky man, he thought. He was looking forward to being at home and putting his feet up for a few days. He glanced around the room again. Well, perhaps they might just have a little diversion before heading home...\n
\n \n
\nTardis passed through the ether heading to Dr Who-knew-where. Nobody aboard was aware that they had been observed. A vast intelligence floating in the void had seen them and it began to plan.\n
\nEntirely unaware, Tardis and its inhabitants sailed serenely through the stars…\n

\nEPILOGUE\n
\n \n
\nThe Tomb of the Cybermen\n
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\n \n
\nAs the shattered remains of Mondas hurtled towards the Sun, three spacecraft lifted off from what was left of the surface. On closer inspection it was clear that each of the craft was, in fact, three ships linked together. It required the power of the engines of all three ships to blast free of the planet's surface and then escape the gravity well of the Sun. Each of the launches saw two of the ships expend their fuel at full burn, acting as boosters, before falling away and allowing the central ship to escape into space. The three surviving ships met and linked together before turning outwards and heading into deep space. They sped out into space, passing first the inner worlds and then the outer gas giants. \n
\nOn board the ships, the survivors of the destruction of Mondas retreated to alcoves, powering down to preserve energy on the long journey ahead. The ships passed through the Oort Cloud, continuing to move outwards. The ships continued into the darkness until the Sun was no more than a speck of light, indistinguishable from countless millions of other stars.\n
\nThe ships continued, their interiors in darkness, operating on the lowest power levels as they passed through the void. Eventually one of the bright dots ahead began to grow larger. It grew into an orange speck and then became clearer as an arid-looking world. The ships remained in darkness until they fired their thrusters, slowing until they moved into orbit around the world. A signal was sent by the lead ship and on board each of the three vessels two Cybermen rose, recharged from their long rest. They operated the controls to disengage the three ships. The lead ship sent another signal, this time to the planet below. The reply came in the form of a homing beacon. One by one the three ships entered orbit and descended to the dusty landing pad below. The pad lowered into the subterranean hangar, taking each ship in turn beneath the surface. With the last ship safely stowed, the Cybermen were roused from their inactivity. Low on power they descended into the depths of the planet. The last to descend was the most imposing of all the Cybermen. The Cyber Controller stood almost eight feet tall and his head lacked the handles of its underlings, instead having a transparent dome showing a mixture of the human brain and the computer components which pulsed with power inside. It also lacked the chest unit worn by the others. \n
\nThe Controller had known of this planet, demarked as Telos or Planet 14 in Cyber Records, from long range scouting expeditions and had decided it was the perfect place to build an emergency stronghold for the Cybermen. Dry, scarcely inhabited and rich in minerals, Telos would become the Cybermen's new home. They would rest here, recovering, waiting, allowing time to pass. They needed to increase their depleted numbers. They had lost in their attack on Earth. The next time would be different. The next time the humans would come to them. When

mankind arrived on Telos the Cybermen and their conversion plants would be waiting for them. Humanity’s curiosity would be its downfall. The human need to explore would bring them to this world and would deliver the Controller his new army. Until then, all the Cybermen had to do was sleep and recharge.\n
\nThe chambers deep below the surface were cold and dark, every wall filled with alcoves. Inside each of these alcoves a Cybermen settled in for its long hibernation. The Controller operated the controls, dipping the temperatures down well below freezing. The solar collectors on the surface would catch the energy of the nearest sun and feed it down to the sleeping giants underground. By the time humanity arrived the Cybermen would be fully recharged.\n
\nThe Controller settled itself into the largest of the alcoves and attached itself to the recharging system positioned in the wall. Slowly its giant head dipped onto its chest as if in sleep and the Controller, like all of its subordinates, slid into hibernation mode.\n
\nThe chamber dulled further, and a membrane spread across the cover of each alcove, enclosing and protecting the inhabitants. The temperature continued to dip, frost crept across every surface of the chamber and the lights finally extinguished. The last of the controls set in motion by the Controller went silent and dark.\n
\nThe entire chamber was as quiet as a tomb.\n
\nThe tomb of the Cybermen.\n
\n \n
\nOn the surface of Telos the winds blew sand across the landing pad. Within a few days it was covered and any sign of activity beyond the weather was swept away. Anyone passing would scan the planet and find a desolate, mostly dead world, exactly as they were intended to see.\n
\nThe Cybermen had been defeated. They had also set their trap and in the dark they waited for their prey to arrive.\n
\n \n
\nDr Who in \n
\nThe Tenth Planet Invades the Moonbase\n
\n \n
\nStarring\n
\nPETER CUSHING as Dr Who\n
\nJIM DALE as Jim\n
\nBERNARD CRIBBINS as Tom\n
\nVALERIE LEON as Vanessa\n
\nJILL CURZON as Louise\n
\nROBERTA TOVEY as Susan\n
\nROBERT HARDY as Hobson\n
\nTIMOTHY DALTON as Jules Benoit\n
\nBURT KWOUK as Chen Lim\n

\nCARMEN MUNROE as Doctor Giselle Martens\n
\nMARTIN SHAW as Nils\n
\nFREDDIE JONES as Barclay\n
\nCATHERINE SCHELL as Evans\n
\nTERENCE COOPER as Terry Cutler\n
\nGuest appearances by\n
\nJOCK MAHONEY as General Cutler\n
\n \n
\nWritten by Kit Pedler & Gerry Davis and David Whitaker\n
\nMusic by James Bernard\n
\nDoctor Who theme music written by Ron Grainer, realised by Delia Derbyshire\n
\nProduced by Milton Subotsky and Michael Carreras\n
\nDirected by Terence Fisher\n
\n \n
\nBased on the BBC TV series.\n
\nAn Aaru/Hammer co-production\n
\n \n